

EXHIBIT A



Contact: Dana Glaze
The Rainmaker Group
470.440.2041
dglaze@letittrain.com

Rainmaker at a Glance

Corporate Headquarters: 4550 North Point Parkway
Suite 400
Alpharetta, GA 30022
678.578.5700

Regional Offices: 3763 Howard Hughes Parkway
Suite 340
Las Vegas, NV 89169
877.221.7474

The Working Capitol
1 Keong Saik Road
089109, Singapore
+65.6805.4022

The Fairmont Dubai
5th Floor, Suite 508
Sheikh Zayed Rd, PO BOX 73310
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
971.4.311.6866

Connect: Website: letittrain.com
Email: contact@letittrain.com

Overview: The Rainmaker Group is the Hotel Revenue and Profit Optimization Cloud, partnering with hotels, resorts and casinos to help them outperform. Rainmaker's integrated solutions maximize profit from every segment of the business, leveraging cutting-edge research to bring customers the most sophisticated systems and help them achieve the highest profitability from their assets. Rainmaker offers the most comprehensive revenue management platform and suite of products and services from one partner, including market and business intelligence, forecasting and pricing, group price optimization, revenue optimization training and services, and best practices consulting.

Rainmaker Accolades and Testimonials

Solutions:

guestrev® provides decision-makers and stakeholders with the tools they need to forecast demand accurately at the finest level of granularity, detect unexpected events and demand patterns often missed by human analysis, and strategically align sales and marketing efforts to increase bookings and maximize revenue and profits. Built on Rainmaker's total guest valuation methodology, **guestrev®** enables hoteliers to better understand demand and set rates that optimize guest room and non-room revenue across various guest segments, while considering the impact of total guest value.

grouprev® is a stand-alone group pricing software solution delivers intelligent pricing, compliant with revenue management policy, optimized to capture the sale in seconds. It provides group sales and revenue management teams the tools to respond quickly to leads and RFPs with optimal prices that drive improved conversion rates (averaging 11+%) and increased group revenues (averaging 8+%). With more than 70 percent of event and meeting RFP's awards to first responders, **grouprev®** gives a property's group sales team the information they need to be the first responder with pricing that maximizes the likelihood of submitting the winning bid.

revintel® is the hospitality industry's most comprehensive revenue business intelligence platform. By gathering, analyzing and aggregating data from a wide range of property systems, **revintel®** provides actionable, revenue-driving insights in real time and in a customizable format. The solution's intuitive dashboards and custom reports help hoteliers measure performance against corporate goals; monitor and measure individual property, department and enterprise data; and instantly drill down to the "why" behind the numbers to make better decisions and drive revenue.

revcaster® is a flexible, cost-effective tool that monitors rate parity, helps ensure that pricing strategies reflect dynamic market conditions, and brings increased opportunity to drive higher profits. With **revcaster®** from Rainmaker, hoteliers can access real-time data to shop competitor rates and analyze their parity across multiple OTAs, alert revenue managers of potential impact from weather conditions or local events, suggest revenue strategy pivots based on market and competitor shifts, and much more. Thousands of properties worldwide trust **revcaster®** to give them the data they need, when they need it, and in the format they prefer. **revcaster®** was voted Hotel Tech Report's Top Market Intelligence Tool in 2018.

Recent Solution Enhancements:

Next generation of **revcaster[®]:**

The next generation of Rainmaker's **revcaster**[®] rate shopping solution brings hoteliers much needed insights on market, demand and property dynamics. This easy-to-use tool allows hoteliers to overcome common roadblocks to implementing a dynamic pricing strategy, such as insufficient staff time, budget and resources. The newly enhanced **revcaster**[®] solution provides the ability to centralize and simplify the processing of all relevant data, ensuring that no information is overlooked when making pricing decisions.

Expertise/Consultation:

Rainmaker includes tactical and strategic consultation as an integral part of every system implementation. This service is provided by a team of industry leaders with decades of experience in consulting, marketing, change management, hospitality operations, and corporate revenue management. The team assesses each organization's strengths and opportunities; assists in educating relevant stakeholders; advises of recommended business process shifts; shares industry best practices; and provides a step-by-step plan to maximize the benefit of profit optimization.

Consulting services can also be provided outside of a system implementation in a variety of focus areas. These include, among others, revenue management readiness, customer valuation, pricing strategies, mix of business, and fine-tuning a new or existing revenue management program.

Implementation:

The Software as a Service deployment model enables clients to quickly implement Rainmaker's revenue management solutions, keeping resource costs low while minimizing risk.

Rainmaker is a Microsoft Silver Certified partner, demonstrating its consistent capability and expertise with Microsoft technologies, and works closely with the Microsoft gaming and hospitality team.

Strategic Partnership:

Clients:

Among the top brands that rely on Rainmaker solutions are Caesars Entertainment, Cosmopolitan Las Vegas, Mohegan Sun, MGM Resorts International, Benchmark Hospitality, Omni Hotels & Resorts, Wynn Las Vegas, and Atlantis Paradise Island.

Recent Accolades:

Rainmaker president, Tammy Farley, will be inducted into the HFTP Hall of Fame on June 19th, received Top Market Intelligence Tool and Top 10 Places to Work in in 2018 Hotel Tech Awards, and 2017 marked seven consecutive years being ranked on INC 5000's list of fastest growing privately held companies in the US.

Executive Team:

Tammy Farley, Co-Founder
Bruce Barfield, Co-Founder
Mike Cowles, CEO
Ellis Connolly, SVP, Head of Sales
Matt Curry, SVP, Head of Product

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BIOS:

Tammy Farley

Co-founder, The Rainmaker Group



Tammy Farley co-founded [The Rainmaker Group](#) in 1998 and serves as its president. She spearheads all sales, marketing and customer-related operations for the organization, which is the market leader in profit optimization solutions serving hotel, casino hotel, resort, and multifamily housing operators.

Farley is someone who always goes the extra mile for a customer or a cause, and in fact once walked 60 alongside a client to raise funds for breast cancer awareness. She brings that same drive and energy to Rainmaker, and her expert stewardship, along with that of co-founder Bruce Barfield, has earned their company a spot among the *Inc. 5000* fastest growing private companies for five consecutive years.

Farley prides herself on delivering on Rainmaker's promises to clients and on creating a great place to work. She brings her passion for community involvement into the workplace, spurring her team on at Habitat for Humanity build events, partnering with Make-a-Wish Georgia to make a four-year-old's Disney and Legoland wish come true, and inviting a former wish recipient to speak at Rainmaker's annual kick-off meeting.

A widely acknowledged expert in revenue management technologies in the travel industry, Farley is a frequent and passionate speaker at industry and academic conferences. She is a highly respected resource for innovative revenue management practices, particularly in the casino, hotel and resort markets. Her expertise in that arena led to her recognition in 2012 as a Great Women of Gaming Proven Leader.

Tammy serves on the board of directors for HSMAI and participates in the Gaming & Leisure CIO Roundtable. She also is vice chair and incoming chair of the Georgia Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Farley graduated from the University of Michigan with a bachelor's degree in political science. She lives in Atlanta with her husband and, during college breaks, her daughter Grace. She loves to travel, and when visiting Grace in New York City, the two bond over shopping expeditions that allow Farley to explore the world of fashion through her daughter's eyes. A work-out fiend, she particularly enjoys putting pedal to the metal at Flywheel.

Bruce Barfield

Co-Founder, The Rainmaker Group



Bruce Barfield is the co-founder of The Rainmaker Group. Since founding the company in 1998, Barfield has led all strategic and innovation initiatives focused solely on delivering the highest revenue returns possible through the development and cultivation of a suite of products and consulting services designed to streamline operational efficiencies, enhance revenue optimization process, improve lead performance, and generate greater demand.

An internationally recognized expert in pricing and business intelligence optimization, Barfield leverages more than 25 years of revenue management experience. Prior to launching The Rainmaker Group, Barfield was the founder of the technology consulting firm BCA. He also worked extensively in the programming division of Delta Air Lines during the airline industry's multi-year adoption of revenue management technologies.

Bruce graduated with a BA in Accounting from Georgia State University. An avid outdoor enthusiast who enjoys golf, snowboarding, and backpacking, Barfield has hiked nearly all portions of the Appalachian Trail. Bruce resides in Atlanta, Georgia, with his wife and two children.

Mike Cowles

Chief Executive Officer, The Rainmaker Group



A results-driven senior leader with proven expertise in driving performance for SaaS and cloud computing providers, Mike Cowles has a strong track record in technology innovation, building high performing teams, growing business lines, and managing organizations through strategic change.

Cowles began his successful career as a technology consultant with Andersen Consulting (Accenture). Prior to joining Rainmaker, he served as senior vice president and general manager of U.S. financial services for SAP, where he directed an expansive team to provide enterprise application software to financial institutions. Previously, he spent 14 years in various leadership roles with Ariba, most recently as senior vice president and general manager of North America. While there, he was a member of a management committee that was responsible for growing Ariba's market cap by over 500% in the years leading up to acquisition by SAP. As a proven industry leader, he has advised private equity and venture capital firms in the software space, helping them to validate potential investments and improve company performance.

Based at Rainmaker's corporate office in Alpharetta, Georgia, Cowles holds both a BS and MS in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Florida.

Ellis Connolly

Senior Vice President, Head of Sales, The Rainmaker Group



Ellis Connolly brings extensive hotel industry knowledge to The Rainmaker Group as its Vice President of Hospitality Sales. With more than 15 years of experience in corporate hospitality, Connolly is responsible for leading Rainmaker's growing sales organization and making the company's industry leading suite of revenue management and profit optimization solutions accessible to the global hospitality market. Connolly's broad range of experience includes executive sales and business development roles with both start-ups and large enterprise organizations within the global hotel and travel sector. He also possesses extensive experience in building market penetration for hotel analytics products.

Prior to his role with The Rainmaker Group, Connolly served as the Chief Revenue Officer at TrustYou, a global travel technology company that leads the market in online reputation management and review monitoring. Originally joining the company as Vice President of Sales for the Americas and Australia, he led TrustYou's global sales initiatives and was responsible for developing the go-to-market strategy.

Connolly also previously served as senior sales director for Cvent, where he led the meetings and groups sales team. During his time at Cvent, he proved himself to be a forward-thinking sales leader, instilling a keen understanding within his team of the relationship between sales and marketing. Prior to this, Connolly was the director of sales and marketing for Aramark, a global provider of food services, facilities and uniforms to the travel industry.

Connolly is a frequent speaker on industry related topics and business intelligence products around the globe. Based in San Diego, CA, he holds a degree from Hyde Park, NY's Culinary Institute of America.

Matt Curry

Senior Vice President, Head of Product, The Rainmaker Group



Matt Curry joined Rainmaker in November of 2016 as head of sales for the company's multifamily division. Upon the announcement of those assets being acquired in early 2017 he began transitioning away from multifamily and over to the hospitality team. Today, as VP, Head of Product, Matt is responsible for Rainmaker's overall product strategy, development, product management and marketing, integrations and customer support.

Prior to joining Rainmaker, Matt was responsible for sales and commercial operations at SignUp4, a startup technology company in the corporate events and travel space based in Atlanta. There he helped fuel growth while scaling the business until ultimately being acquired by Cvent, the world's leading events technology platform and marketplace for hospitality and group business. At Cvent Matt oversaw all acquisition and transition operations of which directly impacted SignUp4's nearly 800 customers ranging from Fortune 1000 corporations, non-profits and associations, government agencies and more.

Matt, originally from Kentucky, resides near Rainmaker's headquarters in Alpharetta, GA along with his wife Kristin and two children, Brayden and Harper. He holds a BS in Finance from Western Kentucky University.

Dan Skodol

Vice President of Revenue Analytics, The Rainmaker Group



Dan Skodol is Vice President of Revenue Analytics at Rainmaker. Dan came to Rainmaker with over ten years of revenue management experience in gaming, hotels, multifamily real estate and airlines. He is responsible for researching and designing enhancements and innovations within Rainmaker's hospitality product suite.

Dan previously held Director of Revenue Management roles for two casino organizations in Atlantic City and Archstone Communities. He holds a BA from Yale University and a Master of Management in Hospitality from Cornell. Dan and his wife reside in Denver, CO with their two-year-old son and enjoy skiing, hiking and travel.

Angie Dobney

Vice President, Casino & Gaming Sales, The Rainmaker Group



Angie Dobney serves as vice president of casino & gaming sales for [The Rainmaker Group](#). An industry veteran with more than two decades of experience in revenue management and hospitality operations, she provides hands-on optimization of total resort profit to Rainmaker's industry-leading gaming and hospitality clients.

As a former Rainmaker customer who turned the tables and joined the market leader in 2014, Dobney brings to her role a user's perspective on the product. Having worked in both manual and automated environments, she knows firsthand the challenges customers face and draws from her personal experience to guide her clients in best practices.

A recognized expert in total asset and portfolio optimization, and as enthusiastic as she is knowledgeable, Dobney is frequently tapped to speak at conferences around the globe. She is a guest lecturer on hotel and hospitality asset and revenue management at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, her alma mater, where she was named Mentor of the Year in 2007. She continues to seek out opportunities to get involved in other university programs in her quest to inspire and motivate the next generation of revenue managers.



RAINMAKER AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Company & Personnel



The Rainmaker Group ranked for a seventh consecutive year on the 2017 Inc. 5000 list of the fastest growing privately held companies in the U.S.



The Rainmaker Group took home the silver medal for Best Productivity - Enhancement Technology for grouprev® in the 17th annual Global Gaming Business Gaming & Technology Awards.



Tammy Farley is being inducted in the HFTP International Hospitality Technology Hall of Fame at the 2018 HITEC Conference in Houston.



Rainmaker's revcaster was voted HotelTechAwards Top Market Intelligence Tool in 2018. The Rainmaker Group also received one of the Top 10 Places to Work in Hotel Tech in the 2018 HotelTechAwards

CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS



Geno Iafrate

President & General Manager

"We have a multifaceted business that requires a keen and detailed understanding of every area at every level. This is of utmost importance in our revenue management practices, as it helps us to both forecast accurately and to turn the data that the system provides into actionable strategies. To get the granular level view of the integrated data we need, a seamless and solid integration between our PMS, our revenue management system and all other systems relevant to the process is a critical factor. This ability to integrate with existing disparate systems is something that Rainmaker does exceptionally well."



Kathleen Cullen

Senior Vice President of Revenue & Distribution

"It is extremely valuable to us to have one comprehensive platform pulling data company-wide so that we can have a consistent, single source of truth for each property, which is why we have decided to expand our revintel® implementation across our growing portfolio. The platform helps us to understand so much regarding pace — both transient and group pace — alerting us to potential deficits throughout the year, and within specific segments.

Rainmaker really listened to our needs and responded with an ideal solution that does the heavy lifting for us and does it quickly, helping us to interpret data and make it actionable. This is really important to us in maintaining our forward momentum."



Monte Gardiner

Managing Director of
Revenue Management

"Best Western selected revcaster® as our rate-shopping provider five years ago, recognizing them at the time as a highly innovative startup with excellent customer service. Their unique, extensive revenue management experience in the mid-market segment has continued to help us improve performance for members ever since, and we continue to be excited about their focus on innovation and customer service as part of the Rainmaker portfolio."



Kristen Lair

Corporate Director of
Revenue Analytics &
Applications

"We've been using Rainmaker solutions since 2008. With Rainmaker we have best in class transient yielding, group pricing and forecasting, and the top-in-class rate shopping functionality."

"revcaster's new platform is a game changer for our organization and our industry. Since transitioning in to the next generation platform of revcaster, the biggest change we've seen is in the ability to customize. The functionality is quick, customizable and the UI is really beautiful and smooth."



"guestrev has really opened a lot of doors in personalizing guest experience at Big Sky Resort. We are now able to quickly track the length of stay, the ADR, and where and who are these guests that are coming to visit us."

"After implementing grouprev, the speed with which our sales team can respond to RFPs has increased dramatically. They are now able to respond quickly and follow up even faster!"

Katie Grice

Revenue Manager



"We researched several platforms, but found Rainmaker to be the top option for what we were looking to do. We needed an enterprise reporting platform that can aid us in identifying micro and macro trends, enabling maximization of revenues. Rainmaker's solution offers us all of that and more."

Darrell Stark

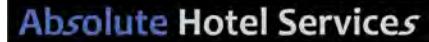
Vice President of
Revenue & Distribution



"Using the Rainmaker platform is so easy! The data and analytics it provides fit any revenue management need. I no longer dread monthly production reporting and account reviews are now a breeze. Their support team welcomes new ideas and are always quick to respond."

Adrienne Cousins

Director of Revenue



Nicolas Ishkanian

Vice President Revenue & Distribution

"Our GMs love using revcaster® to help set rates and maximize revenues. The support from the Rainmaker team is always quick and efficient, and they have really helped our team to understand the solution and use it to its full potential. We recently completed some updated training for our GMs on the platform and they are excited for the new features that the next generation of revcaster® will bring them. We really look forward to seeing how these new functionalities will continue to improve our pricing and revenue management strategies."



Paul G.V. Baker

Deputy Chief Operating Officer

"Rainmaker's total guest valuation methodology has brought about a true transformation in how we allocate our inventory, helping us yield improvements across our entire enterprise. Rainmaker, is more than just a product, though. What really set them apart for us is the high-level support and service we consistently receive from their team. Having a local Rainmaker support team here in Singapore has been so crucial for us in getting timely support on our needs and in understanding the culture of our team. They've worked with us to address our needs, even adding new features and developing new interfaces specifically to help us advance our strategies. Rainmaker is a true partner who always works hand in hand with us to achieve Resort World's goals."



Colin McClean

Director of Sales - SKYCITY Hotels & Tower

"Although we were not unhappy with our current revenue management system, Rainmaker's understanding of our desire to provide total guest value at our properties led to our decision to move. Rainmaker's gaming history along with their ability to support a total revenue management strategy gave us the reassurance that we were making the right move."



Eliska Hesova

Director of Revenue & Business Development

"Partnering with Rainmaker is an exciting move for us. We are grateful for the assistance and the level of commitment Rainmaker showed us in the Irma aftermath and look forward to the benefits of an automated best-in-class revenue management solution. With the support of Rainmaker's products behind our pricing decisions, we are committed to coming back stronger, offering our guests the Limitless All-inclusive vacation experience at the best possible price and being part of the tourism recovery in St. Maarten."

For 20 years hospitality companies have put their trust in Rainmaker's full suite of cloud-based solutions to help them optimize revenue, drive increased profitability and outperform their competitors. Our integrated solutions maximize profit from every segment of the business.



Built on Rainmaker's total guest valuation methodology, guestrev® enables hoteliers to better understand demand and set rates that optimize guest room and non-room revenue across various guest segments, while considering the impact of total guest value.

Optimize revenue based on total guest value

Go beyond a rules based strategy & benefit from true revenue optimization

Increase revenue by up to 12%

GUESTREV® HANDLES THE COMPLEXITY TO SIMPLIFY REVENUE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES



OPTIMIZE DEMAND MIX



ANALYZE DEMAND PATTERNS



MANAGE EXCEPTIONS



PROJECT EVENTS INDEPENDENTLY



STREAMLINE WORKFLOWS



grouprev® helps hoteliers convert more group and meeting business and maximize revenue by optimizing group room rates, maximizing function space revenue and more effectively managing property's sales & catering calendar.



RIGHT DATA. RIGHT QUOTE.

Move beyond Minimum Acceptable Rates (MARs). grouprev® optimizes group pricing for each individual piece of business.



HIGHLIGHT VALUABLE LEADS

With ever-increasing volumes of group RFPs, grouprev® leverages powerful analytics to help you separate high-value leads from the spam.



REMOVE THE REVENUE MANAGEMENT BOTTLENECK

Reduce the manual effort, time and resources required to manage your group RFPs and validate decisions.

Improve your Group Room Revenue by up to **8.4%** or more. React in real-time and increase your deal conversions by up to **11.5%**



revintel® is the industry's most comprehensive business intelligence platform. By gathering, analyzing and aggregating data from a wide range of property systems, revintel® provides actionable, insights in real time and in a customizable format.



Hotel data is complex and is sourced from disparate systems that often lack standardized metrics. Manual management and manipulation of key data creates unnecessary delay and risk. Speed, consistency and accuracy are critical factors in optimizing your revenue.

Make smarter, faster, better revenue decisions

Uncover Opportunities within your business

Multi-property Portfolio views



revcaster® is a flexible, cost-effective tool that monitors rate parity, helps ensure that pricing strategies reflect dynamic market conditions, and brings increased opportunity to drive higher profits.



DESIGNED BY REVENUE MANAGERS



DRIVEN BY OUR USERS



SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

MARKET & RATE INTELLIGENCE MADE EASY

5000+

Happy hotel customers

97%

Customer Satisfaction

87%

Of support tickets resolved in one business day – 60% in the same hour



hotel revenue & profit optimization cloud



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- DRAFT

Rainmaker Continues to Expand Global Footprint

Company acquires several key hospitality customers in international markets

ALPHARETTA, GA. — June 19, 2018 — The Rainmaker Group (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, is excited to announce the continued expansion of their global presence by adding four new countries to their catalog of customers.

Over the last few months, Rainmaker has added customers in four countries: New Zealand, St Maarten, Suriname, and Singapore. The acquired properties span three different property types: gaming, resort, and all-inclusive.

The rapid growth of their customer base into global markets comes at the heels of Rainmaker's plan to set up international data centers in Australia and the expansion of business operations abroad by hiring for key positions in the Asia-Pacific, Middle-East and Africa regions.

After record sales in Q1, it is great to see this continued growth," said Mike Cowles, CEO of Rainmaker. "July marks our 20th year in business, and we are proud to see our reach growing in market type and across the globe."

Rainmaker's groundbreaking revenue and profit optimization product suite includes:

guestrev®, an intuitive and easy-to-use revenue management solution that analyzes total guest value across a hotel or casino property to forecast and price rooms;

grouprev®, an innovative group pricing solution that streamlines the process of responding to group RFPs by analyzing historical data, future demand, and price sensitivity to recommend the best pricing for group business;

revcaster®, a powerful rate shopping tool that gives hoteliers access to real-time actionable market data, so that rates can be set against the competitive landscape; and

revintel®, an intuitive business intelligence solution that improves day-to-day revenue management by mining various data sets and providing deep insights at a granular level.

About Rainmaker

Rainmaker is the hotel revenue management and profit optimization cloud. The company partners with hotels, resorts, and casinos to help them outperform their revenue and profit objectives. Rainmaker's cloud-based solutions for transient and group pricing optimization, demand forecasting, business intelligence and market analysis are designed to help hoteliers streamline operations and revenue optimization processes, improve lead performance and drive guest bookings. Recognized as one of the top privately held companies in the United States, Rainmaker has been named to Inc. 5000's 'Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies' for the last seven years and to the *Atlanta Business Chronicle's* list of '100 Fastest Growing Companies in Atlanta.' Rainmaker serves hospitality customers throughout the world from its corporate headquarters in Alpharetta, Ga. and from offices in Las Vegas, Singapore, and Dubai. To learn more about Rainmaker and its suite of hotel revenue management and profit optimization solutions, visit www.LetItRain.com.

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Dana Glaze, The Rainmaker Group, 470-440-2041, dglaze@letitrain.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Rainmaker Group Partners with Torarica Group of Hotels

Company to Implement Rainmaker's Industry-Leading Revenue Optimization Solutions at All Three Properties

ALPHARETTA, GA. — June 14, 2018 — [**The Rainmaker Group**](#) (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, today announced that the Torarica Group has selected Rainmaker's guestrev®, revintel® and revcaster® solutions to drive revenue at all three of their Suriname properties: Torarica Hotel & Casino, Eco Resort, and Royal Torarica Hotel.

The company was looking for a set of tools to help them formalize their revenue management processes and become more sophisticated in how they manage and forecast their business. The choice in Rainmaker will not only aid in this but also reduce the amount of manual processes for the company.

"Before Rainmaker, everything was very manual," explained Myrna Kaliar, Account Manager, Travel Agents and Tour Operators at Torarica Group of Hotels. "In the time we are saving using Rainmaker solutions, we are able to focus on making more sophisticated revenue management decisions."

"We are very excited to work with the Torarica Group," said Mike Cowles, Rainmaker's CEO. "Rainmaker's solutions will be a great aid in giving them time back in their days to focus on strategy. We look forward to working with this eager partner as we expand our footprint in the Caribbean."

The selected products from Rainmaker's groundbreaking revenue and profit optimization suite include:

- guestrev®, an intuitive and easy-to-use revenue management solution that analyzes total guest value across a hotel or casino property to forecast and price rooms;
- revintel®, an intuitive business intelligence solution that improves day-to-day revenue management by mining various data sets and providing deep insights at a granular level; and
- revcaster®, a powerful rate shopping tool that gives hoteliers access to real-time actionable market data, so that rates can be set against the competitive landscape.

About the Torarica Group: The warm welcome of Suriname takes a new meaning at the Torarica Group. With over 55 years' experience in accommodating guests and catering to their every need, the Torarica Group is the most famous and renowned hotel group in Suriname offering the ideal location for businesses, relaxing getaways and family holidays.

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Press Release

Concilio Labs and The Rainmaker Group Announce New Technology Partnership

Washington, DC (June ?, 2018) – Concilio Labs and The Rainmaker Group today announced a new technology partnership to deliver more actionable and meaningful guest insights to hoteliers.

The Rainmaker Group (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, will leverage the power of Concilio's proprietary Insights Engine technology to empower hoteliers to understand who their guests are on a deeper level, anticipate needs, predict outcomes and personalize interactions. The alliance and integration partnership will deliver benefits that are squarely focused on making it easier for hotels to harness the power of guest intelligence to make data-driven decisions, while also helping them realize their growth, loyalty and revenue objectives.

"We are very excited to partner with Concilio Labs to add the Insights Engine to our solutions." said Mike Cowles, CEO of Rainmaker . "Rainmaker is revolutionizing the hotel profit optimization landscape beyond the traditional revenue management boundaries to help our clients make better decisions with data and drive measurable results."

Concilio's Insight Engine provides guest scoring, dynamic guest profiles, reservation information, and automated actionable insights via machine learning and complex data analysis. With the creation of comprehensive guest profiles, hotels are always just a touch away from critical guest insight such as travel purpose, social influence, loyalty and long-term value. A proprietary guest score makes it easy to compare one guest or guest persona to another. Equipped with this information, hoteliers know what to offer each guest, at the right time, through the right channel, not only ensuring guest satisfaction, but also tracking continued behavior and response to better understand the ROI on marketing campaigns and promotional offers. Additionally, hoteliers can explore and combine data to understand key market drivers and uncover trends.

"We're thrilled to have the chance to work in partnership with Rainmaker on the delivery of key guest insights data and to enhance hotel-guest relationships," said Terri Miller, CEO of Concilio Labs. "The combination of Rainmaker's award-winning revenue management tools and resources and our advanced business intelligence capabilities make for a very powerful market offering. We look forward to doing great things together."

Rainmaker and Concilio Labs will be at this year's HITEC in Houston. Attendees are invited to visit Booth 1104 to learn more and view a live demo. For more information visit www.letitrain.com and conciliolabs.com.

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About Rainmaker

Rainmaker is the hotel revenue management and profit optimization cloud. The company partners with hotels, resorts, and casinos to help them outperform their revenue and profit objectives. Rainmaker's cloud-based solutions for transient and group pricing optimization, demand forecasting, business intelligence and market analysis are designed to help hoteliers streamline operations and revenue optimization processes, improve lead performance and drive guest bookings. Recognized as one of the top privately held companies in the United States, Rainmaker has been named to Inc. 5000's 'Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies' for the last seven years and to the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*'s list of '100 Fastest Growing Companies in Atlanta.' Rainmaker serves hospitality customers throughout the world from its corporate headquarters in Alpharetta, Ga. and from offices in Las Vegas, Singapore, and Dubai. To learn more about Rainmaker and its suite of hotel revenue management and profit optimization solutions, visit www.LetItRain.com.

About Concilio Labs

Concilio Labs is on a mission to solve key issues in hospitality today—those of guest personalization and hotel loyalty—by developing innovative technology solutions that push boundaries. Concilio's Insight Engine, a guest intelligence platform, empowers hoteliers with actionable insights to create personalized guest experiences that go far beyond traditional and existing capabilities in other similar tools. Other core service offerings target guest experience, including tailored mobile app and integrated booking engine solutions for hoteliers looking to take their guest engagement to the next level. The management team has decades of proven experience working with technology leaders, including MICROS, giving them the credibility and a deep understanding of the hospitality industry and its growing needs. Concilio Labs is a rapidly growing brand with offices in the Washington, DC area and Ukraine. To learn more, visit conciliolabs.com.

Media Contacts:

Dana Glaze, The Rainmaker Group, 470-440-2041, dglaze@letitrain.com

Terri Miller, CEO/Co-Founder Concilio Labs, 571.733.9743 Ext: 710, marketing@conciliolabs.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Golden Entertainment Selects Comprehensive Rainmaker Suite to Drive Guest Bookings and Increase Profitability

Company to Implement Rainmaker's Industry-Leading Revenue Optimization Solutions at Two Properties

ALPHARETTA, GA. — May 22, 2018 —[The Rainmaker Group](#) (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, today announced that Golden Entertainment Inc. (NASDAQ: GDEN) has selected a comprehensive Rainmaker suite to drive competitive advantage at two of the company's Nevada properties. The agreement marks Rainmaker's expansion in the U.S. gaming market.

Golden Entertainment wanted an integrated cloud-based revenue management suite that would streamline operations, drive guest bookings and increase profitability at the iconic Stratosphere Casino, Hotel & Tower in Las Vegas and Aquarius Casino Resort in Laughlin, the company's two largest resorts. After a lengthy review process, the company selected the Rainmaker solutions, citing the company's reputation in the gaming sector.

"We announced a capital investment plan at the Stratosphere which includes room renovations, refreshing the property's exterior, and adding exciting new venues to attract and engage patrons while enhancing the overall guest experience," said Steve Arcana, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Golden Entertainment. "Rainmaker's outstanding track record with large-scale casino properties and the company's reputation in the gaming market influenced our decision to select its revenue management and profit optimization software solutions."

Tammy Farley, president of The Rainmaker Group, said, "Hotels, casinos and other hospitality venues that want to achieve a competitive advantage must employ state-of-the-art revenue management technology. Our portfolio of profit optimization and analytics solutions will help Aquarius Casino Resort and Stratosphere Casino, Hotel & Tower distill the most complex data from numerous sources and turn it into actionable insights, resulting in increased profitability. We are thrilled to welcome Golden Entertainment to the Rainmaker family and to expand our footprint in the U.S. gaming market."

About Rainmaker

Rainmaker is the hotel revenue and profit optimization cloud. The company partners with hotels, resorts and casinos to help them outperform their revenue and profit objectives. Rainmaker's cloud-based solutions for transient and group pricing optimization, forecasting, and revenue-centric business intelligence are designed to help hoteliers streamline operations, enhance revenue optimization processes, improve lead performance, and drive guest bookings. Recognized as one of the top privately held companies in the United States, Rainmaker has been named to Inc. 5000's 'Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies' for the last seven years and to the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*'s list of '100 Fastest Growing Companies in Atlanta'. Rainmaker serves hospitality customers throughout the world from its

corporate headquarters in Alpharetta, Ga. and from offices in Las Vegas, Singapore and Dubai. To learn more about Rainmaker and its suite of hotel revenue and profit optimization solutions, visit www.LetItRain.com.

About Golden Entertainment, Inc.

Golden Entertainment, Inc. owns and operates gaming properties across two divisions – resort casino operations and distributed gaming. The Company operates approximately 16,000 gaming devices, 116 table games, 5,168 hotel rooms, and provides jobs for over 7,000 team members. Golden Entertainment owns eight resort casinos – seven in Southern Nevada and one in Maryland. Through its distributed gaming business in Nevada and Montana, Golden Entertainment operates slot machines at over 1,000 locations and owns nearly 60 traditional taverns in Nevada. The Company is licensed in Illinois to operate video gaming terminals. Golden Entertainment is focused on maximizing the value of its portfolio by leveraging its scale, leadership position and proven management capabilities across its two divisions. For more information, visit www.goldenent.com.

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Media Contact:

Dana Glaze, The Rainmaker Group, 470-440-2041, dglaze@letittrain.com

Brad Goldberg, for Golden Entertainment, 702-495-4489, bgoldberg@goldenent.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Rainmaker Group Continues to Make a Mark in the APAC Region as it Partners with SKYCITY Entertainment Group

Company to Implement Rainmaker's Industry-Leading Revenue Optimization Solutions at Two Properties in New Zealand

ALPHARETTA, GA. — May 23, 2018 — [**The Rainmaker Group**](#) (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, today announced that SKYCITY Entertainment Group has selected Rainmaker's **guestrev®** and **revintel®** to drive revenue at two SKYCITY locations. The agreement marks Rainmaker's expansion in the Australian & New Zealand markets.

SKYCITY Entertainment Group (NASDAQ: SKYTY), owns six casinos across five locations in Australia and New Zealand. The company sought a revenue management system (RMS) that could help them reveal total guest value across their property and are first focusing these efforts at SKYCITY Hotel and SKYCITY Grand, both located in Auckland, New Zealand. After weighing their options between their current RMS vendor and Rainmaker, they selected Rainmaker's solutions, citing the company's history and understanding of the gaming sector.

“Although we were not unhappy with our current revenue management system, Rainmaker’s understanding of our desire to provide total guest value at our properties led to our decision to move,” said Colin McClean, director of Sales at SKYCITY Hotels & Tower. “Rainmaker’s gaming history along with their ability to support a total revenue management strategy gave us the reassurance that we were making the right move. We’re excited to implement **guestrev** and **revintel** and look forward to benefiting from the increased revenue they will bring.”

This partnership comes at a great time as Rainmaker announces their plan to set up an Australian Data-Center to support their customers and expansion into the region.

SKYCITY Entertainment has selected the following revenue management and profit optimization software solutions from Rainmaker:

- **guestrev®**, an intuitive and easy-to-use revenue management solution that analyzes total guest value across a hotel or casino property to forecast and price rooms;
- **revintel®**, an intuitive business intelligence solution that improves day-to-day revenue management by mining various data sets and providing deep insights at a granular level.

“The Asia-Pacific region is really looking for someone to make a stand in the gaming market and provide a total revenue management solution,” said Patrick Andres, Rainmaker’s senior vice-president Asia-Pacific, Middle-East and Africa. “Our portfolio of profit optimization and analytics solutions will do just that and we are thrilled to add SKYCITY Entertainment Group to the Rainmaker family. Our next steps in adding a support center in Australia will be of even more benefit to SKYCITY and the rest Australian hospitality market.”

About SKYCITY Entertainment: SKYCITY Entertainment Group is New Zealand's largest tourism, leisure and entertainment company, listed in both New Zealand and Australia.

As one of only three publicly listed casino operators in Australasia, SKYCITY operates integrated entertainment complexes in New Zealand (Auckland, Hamilton and Queenstown) and Australia (Adelaide and Darwin). In addition to the contemporary casino gaming facilities, SKYCITY offers world-class restaurants, bars, conference facilities, and Auckland's iconic SKY Tower, that appeal to both domestic and international visitors. SKYCITY operates award winning hotels in Auckland and Darwin, including SKYCITY Hotel, SKYCITY Grand Hotel and SKYCITY Darwin Hotel & Resort. Two additional hotels are under construction in Auckland and Adelaide. For more insight, visit www.skycityentertainmentgroup.com.

About Rainmaker

Rainmaker is the hotel revenue management and profit optimization cloud. The company partners with hotels, resorts, and casinos to help them outperform their revenue and profit objectives. Rainmaker's cloud-based solutions for transient and group pricing optimization, demand forecasting, business intelligence and market analysis are designed to help hoteliers streamline operations and revenue optimization processes, improve lead performance and drive guest bookings. Recognized as one of the top privately held companies in the United States, Rainmaker has been named to Inc. 5000's 'Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies' for the last seven years and to the Atlanta Business Chronicle's list of '100 Fastest Growing Companies in Atlanta.' Rainmaker serves hospitality customers throughout the world from its corporate headquarters in Alpharetta, Ga. and from offices in Las Vegas, Singapore, and Dubai. To learn more about Rainmaker and its suite of hotel revenue management and profit optimization solutions, visit www.LetItRain.com.

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Media Contact:

Dana Glaze, The Rainmaker Group, 470-440-2041, dglaze@letitrain.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ZS and Rainmaker Announce Partnership to Help Hoteliers Improve and Capitalize on Revenue Management

Leveraging their combined experience, the firms will drive innovation for the hospitality industry

ALPHARETTA, GA. — June 12, 2018 —[The Rainmaker Group](#) (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, and [ZS Associates](#) (ZS), a global consulting firm are excited to announce their new partnership. The two firms will combine ZS's strategies, methodologies and frameworks with Rainmaker's powerful technologies and advanced science to drive innovation in hospitality revenue management.

"We are pleased to have ZS as a partner and know our joint knowledge of the industry will be a great benefit to our customers," said Mike Cowles, CEO of The Rainmaker Group. "This partnership is a great way to showcase both of our areas of expertise and provide joint leadership and innovation to help advance the revenue optimization discipline as a whole."

"By partnering with Rainmaker, ZS will be able to work with clients to implement revenue strategies on a more complete level than we can do alone, as well as allowing a broader group of hospitality companies access to ZS's skills and staff," said Glenn Hollister, principal at ZS. "We are particularly excited to work with Rainmaker's experts to advance industry practices in areas such as total profit optimization and personalization beyond current practices."

When it comes to revenue management, one of the biggest challenges—and missed opportunities—for most companies is personalization. The partnership will produce valuable research, based on a wealth of data from both ZS and Rainmaker, to help clients understand industry trends, adopt best practices and more. ZS and Rainmaker plan to explore processes and advanced analytics to maximize the effectiveness of personalization throughout the sales funnel.

The partnership will continue to evolve and bring new capabilities to help hospitality professionals enhance their insights, improve their revenue optimization and drive sustained growth for their companies.

About Rainmaker

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Dubai. To learn more about Rainmaker and its suite of hotel revenue management and profit optimization solutions, visit www.LetItRain.com.

About ZS

ZS is the world's largest firm focused exclusively on helping companies improve overall performance and grow revenue and market share through end-to-end sales and marketing solutions—from customer insights and strategy to analytics, operations and technology. More than 5,500 ZS professionals in 22 offices worldwide draw on deep industry and domain expertise to deliver impact for clients across multiple industries. To learn more, visit www.zs.com or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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Media Contact:

Dana Glaze, The Rainmaker Group, 470-440-2041, dglaze@letitrain.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Rainmaker Group Now Integrates with hotel Property Management System, RoomkeyPMS

ALPHARETTA, GA. — May 24, 2018 —[The Rainmaker Group](#) (Rainmaker), a leading provider of cloud-based hospitality revenue and profit optimization software, today announced that the integration between RoomkeyPMS and revintel®, Rainmaker's business intelligence (BI) solution, is now officially live.

An early adopter of this new integration is [The Spectator Hotel](#), a boutique property in Charleston, SC, managed by [Charlestowne Hotels](#). "We're excited to finally have a best-of-breed BI platform in our toolkit and look forward to rolling this out to additional Charlestowne properties," said Johnathan Capps, Vice President of Revenue at Charlestowne Hotels. "Our revenue team spends countless hours aggregating copious amounts of data from multiple systems to understand the health and performance of their asset(s). With revintel, they'll have instant access to the data they need when and how they need it, allowing them to focus more on revenue generating activities."

Thanks to revintel, revenue managers can better understand their portfolio's health by property, agent, or market in comparison to past performance—without having to manually collect, consolidate, and manipulate data. revintel pulls this data automatically and formats the information for you, putting the user just a click away from the analytics that empower to drive business forward.

RoomKeyPMS is a cloud-powered software that lets you run your hotel while tracking every detail, an connecting to hospitality systems, such as revintel, across all of your locations. RoomKeyPMS exists to make hotel management simpler.

"The team from RoomKeyPMS has been an absolute pleasure to work with. It's no secret why they have such a loyal and passionate customer base," said Matt Curry, Senior Vice President and Head of Product at Rainmaker. "The integration with RoomKeyPMS is exciting as it gives their 90,000+ rooms under management access to the hospitality industry's most powerful BI platform in revintel."

"Rainmaker is an industry leader in the revenue management, business intelligence and market analysis space and we're proud to add them as a new integration partner," said Tim Major, CEO at RoomKeyPMS. "As a customer centric organization, we continue to strive to increase our leading eco-system of interfaces and cultivate a roadmap that allows them to grow with RoomKeyPMS and continue to drive their business forward. Together, Rainmaker and RoomKeyPMS put any hotel in its best position to succeed and outperform its market."

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About Roomkey | RoomKeyPMS is cloud-powered software that lets you run your hotel while tracking every detail, and connecting to hospitality systems across all of your locations. The easy-to-use system integrates to hundreds of hospitality systems, drives revenues with no transaction fees while saving you time. RoomKeyPMS strives to make hotel management simpler. Every year its cloud platform is trusted to handle over 30 million transactions for our hoteliers. Customers agree RoomKeyPMS is the leading cloud-based hotel PMS that is easy to use for front-desk staff, insightful for revenue managers, and robust for executive teams. RoomKeyPMS will give you the power and control to maximize your RevPAR and ADR with a product offering unmatched in the industry. In 35 years of hotel property management experience, RoomKeyPMS has had a front row seat to the unprecedented transformation of the hospitality industry. With today's domination of web-based reservations, OTAs, and the rapid evolution of mobile bookings and social reviews, RoomKey understands the profound effect these changes have had on your occupancy and ADR. The RoomKeyPMS platform has progressed along with industry trends and pioneered a full suite of guest lifecycle product offerings that are unmatched in the industry.

www.roomkeypms.com

About Charlestowne Hotels | Founded in 1980, Charlestowne Hotels is a leading full-service hospitality management company offering innovative expertise in hotel development, operational controls, marketing management, revenue optimization, and financial reporting. Now regarded as one of the top hotel management companies in the U.S., Charlestowne Hotels leads its properties to consistently achieve RevPAR growth nearly double the national average. The brand offers a robust portfolio of properties around the country, from independent inns and resorts to franchised hotels and condos. By employing a proficient management style that hones in on the guest experience, Charlestowne Hotels drives its properties to regularly receive industry accolades on Condé Nast Traveler's Gold List and Readers' Choice Awards, Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards for "Top City Hotels in the Continental U.S." and "Top 100 Best Hotels in the World," and top standings on TripAdvisor. For more information please visit www.CharlestowneHotels.com.

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Media Contact:

Dana Glaze, The Rainmaker Group, 470-440-2041, dglaze@letittrain.com

5 Things That You Must Evaluate Before You Invest In Your Next RMS



20 Years of Making it Rain for Our Customers



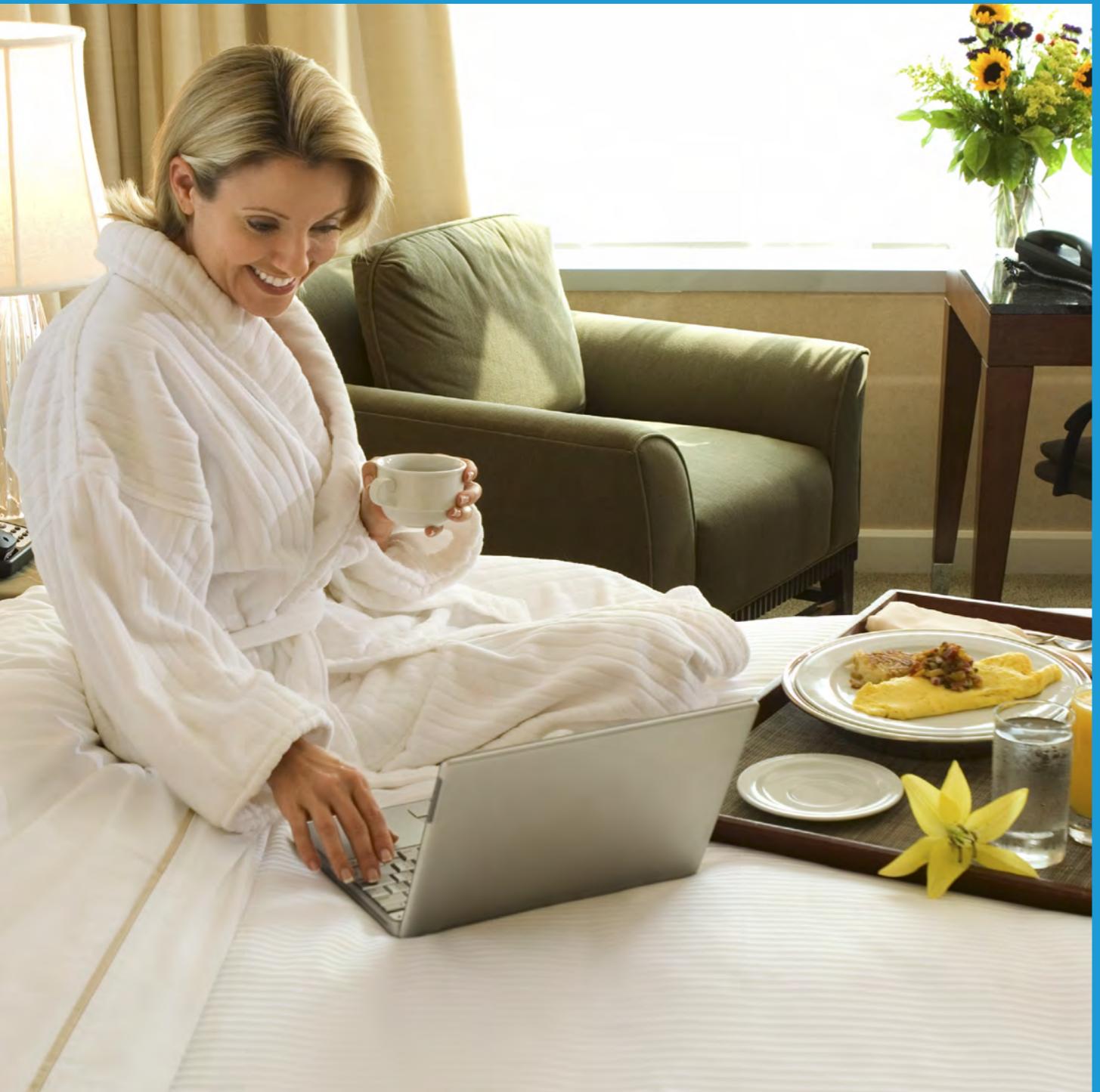
SCIENCE vs RULES

The Future of Revenue Management

An effective revenue management system (RMS) performs complex calculations in a matter of milliseconds to present the best, actionable data on both a macro and micro level. Hoteliers can then use that information to improve customer experience, create enhanced levels of personalization and generate greater ancillary revenue in the process. But when it comes to these systems, there are some major differentiating factors.

Historically, rules-based systems have 'ruled'. However, in such a dynamic industry where occupancy and RevPAR are the lifeline of any hotel, science-based systems make for better decisions in the long run as rules-based systems lack the capability to achieve true optimization. A rules-based methodology enables decision-makers to quickly and easily understand why the price recommendation is being made, but lacks sophistication and accuracy.

Next generation science-driven RM relies on machine learning and complex algorithms to determine accurate pricing based on criteria such as demand, market conditions, competitive landscape, guest behavior, and demographics.



TOTAL GUEST VALUE

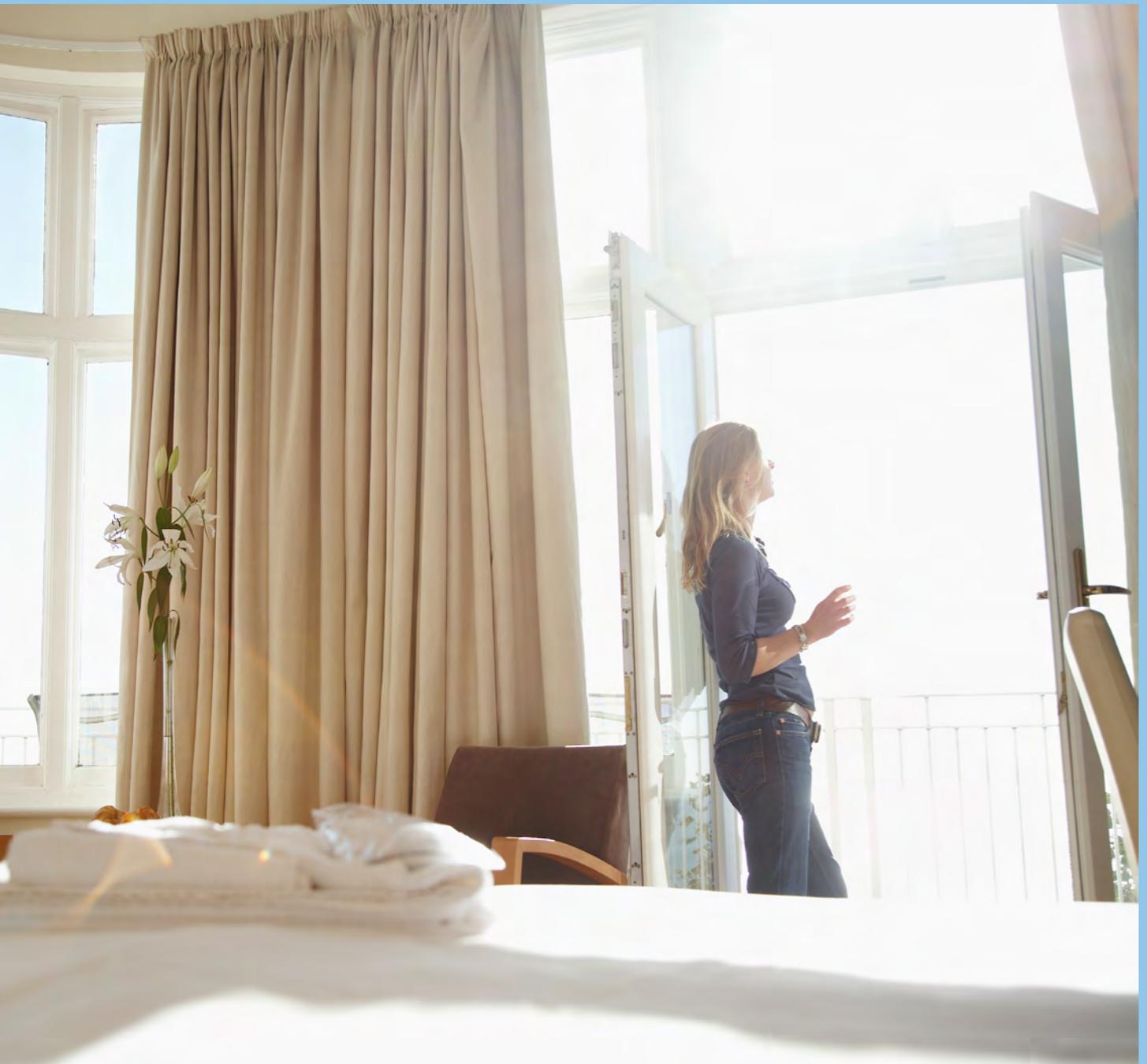
Guest valuation in algorithms

How can you predict the value of a guest over the course of his or her interactions with your hotel brand?

A guest's value is determined using the relationship between spending patterns and profit. Factors to consider include room rates, purchases, upgrades, number of stays, length of stays and visit frequency. Only a true algorithmic system can get to the data and analyze it in relation to the total value of a guest across the entire hotel property to forecast and price rooms as well as drive add-on sales.

Hoteliers with a clear understanding of their guests and competitive differentiators can enhance their guests' experience while simultaneously generating significant streams of ancillary revenue. By mining various data sets at a granular level, which include both guest stay and guest spending history anywhere on property as part of the pricing analysis, your hotel can offer the best rates and ancillary products to your most valuable guests.

Guests can generate revenue for a hotel in many different ways. Revenue management powered by guest valuation algorithms enables hotels to increase guest wallet share, keeping guest spending on-property instead of losing it to local attractions, restaurants, spas or competitors.



PMS INTEGRATION

How complete is the PMS integration?

A property management system (PMS) serves as the heart and soul of your hotel. As such, the PMS needs to connect to primary systems that are imperative to run hotel operations at the highest level. Revenue management is considered one of the most important integrations because good pricing algorithms will help a hotel be more profitable.

At its essence, revenue management is about setting the right price for the right guest at the right time - and when it comes to optimizing your RMS, tight integration with a hotel's property management system ensures that data collection is fast and efficient. As PMS' become repositories for data for the entirety of a guest's lifecycle, the ability for these key systems to communicate in real-time, as well as automate and streamline daily transactions is critical.

By leveraging the RMS platform to pull data company-wide from the PMS, hotels can get a single source view of performance and opportunities at a property level. With real-time 2-way integration, the process of updating dynamic pricing from the RMS to the PMS is automated, so the two systems can work in tandem to capitalize on total guest revenue.



SERVICE & SUPPORT

Focus on your business

In the always-on hospitality industry, there is no time for technology disruptions. And there is definitely no one-sized-fits-all, cookie-cutter solution when it comes to an effective revenue management strategy.

You need a reliable, responsive and experienced partner that can give you the power to concentrate on the profitability of your business rather than how to implement, maintain or upgrade RMS technology.

It all starts with understanding your hotel's unique needs and goals, including interviews with every team member who would be using the solution. Once your system is live, schedule weekly calls to keep the system optimized for your operations. And anytime your staff calls the solution provider, they immediately talk to a real person with a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of your specific technology set-up.

You should also look for a cloud-based RM software suite that can offer predictable IT costs and an accelerated return on investment.



CULTURE

Revenue culture property-wide

Every profitable hotel has at one thing in common: a revenue-centric culture.

Research from Harvard Business Review indicates that “high-performing sales cultures are characterized by an ability to align (gain clarity on vision, strategy, and shared employee behaviors), execute (move in the agreed upon direction with minimal friction), and renew (continuously improve at a pace that exceeds competitors).” Collectively, these factors encompass ‘organizational culture’.

This means that not only does the revenue management team need to understand the impact of RM, but so does your marketing, sales, events, and so on. For example, if your marketing team pushes ahead with a special weekend rate as a promotion, but your revenue managers and sales staff know there is a citywide convention, then having RM in place is useless.

Once system integration has been optimized, it’s critical for hotel teams to be aligned on the long-term strategic plan as well as short-term tactical campaigns. Empower your team with the right tools and RMS to help them do their job efficiently and effectively.



MAKING THE DECISION

The right RMS investment always pays off

Revenue management systems are at the center of a hotel's profit optimization process which depends so much on capturing, analyzing and using data to make decisions. With so many hotel companies investing in revenue management platforms to fuel business growth, it's important to understand the full landscape. This means that executives involved in the RMS evaluation process should prioritize where they direct their time and attention.

Next-generation RMS are advancing beyond the rules-based model. Using a rules-based approach today leads to inefficient timing and pricing, and results in missed profit opportunities, whereas a science-based RMS offers a more sophisticated and accurate solution.

Forward-thinking hoteliers understand that not all guest are created equal. Look for an RMS that enables you to determine and act upon total guest valuations to drive revenue and marketing.

Other differentiators to consider include depth of PMS integration, vendor reputation for service and support, and whether the RMS has the ability to inspire a revenue-centric culture. At the end of the day, selecting the right RMS can mean the difference between profitability and insolvency for your hotel.



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DISASTER RECOVERY AND READINESS CONSIDERATIONS FOR HOTEL REVENUE MANAGEMENT

When a disaster strikes, hotel operators face a complex situation that begins by safeguarding people and property and rapidly expands to respond to the unique circumstances created by the shock to the system. For revenue management and sales leaders, preparing for and recovering from any event that significantly changes the supply and demand in a hotel market is a real concern, especially in times characterized by volatile climate, cultural, and geopolitical conditions.

Often the first place to look is examining historically similar events and existing data to understand what to expect with regards to social and economic impact, short-term support of recovery efforts, longer-term impact to tourism and overall expected impact to hotel performance.

HUMANITARIAN AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

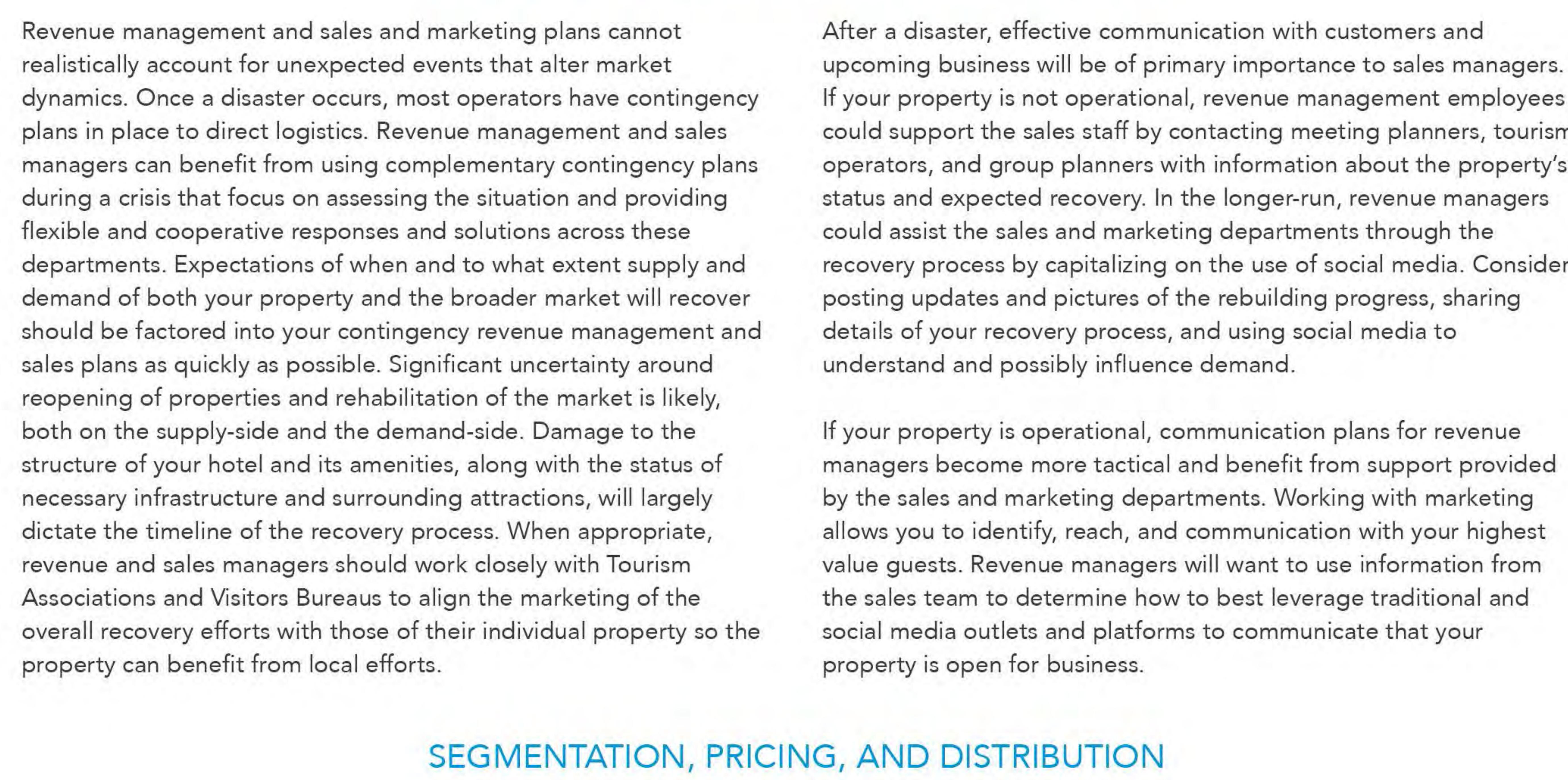
The first priority in the aftermath of a disaster is to ensure the safety and security of your hotel guests, staff, property, and systems. Once lives are preserved and the chaos of the disaster situation begins to dissipate, the path of a property towards recovery broadens, as a shock to the supply or demand of a hotel has a far-reaching impact on both daily operations and long-term goals.

Of course, the role of a hotel property in facilitating recovery after a disruptive event depends on the severity of damage to the property. In many cases, a hotel plays a dual role, as both a resource for humanitarian and rebuilding efforts and also a community member and victim of the disaster. It takes thoughtful planning to employ strategies to rebuild your business while also encouraging the broad recovery of the hotel industry, the community, and the overall economy. ss team members with plans to rehire, to using potential idle time to invest in employee development and training.

Historical data can be extremely insightful and help form a time frame and base line but of course it can only go so far, as every situation is different. There are many important topics for revenue managers to consider for disaster readiness and recovery, including: humanitarian and ethical concerns; sales and marketing plans; segmentation, pricing, and distribution strategies; competitive sets; demand forecasting; and technology systems.

Typically, revenue management strategies and systems are understandably not the focus immediately following a disaster. However, one revenue management-related activity that should be a primary consideration is ensuring that your price levels are in the best interest of your market and its recovery effort. If you use an automated revenue management system, you should watch prices closely as the shifts in supply and demand might result in prices that are unethical, and sometimes even illegal.

Another humanitarian concern that revenue managers may face in the wake of a catastrophic event is how to best support their existing staff. Finding the balance between keeping your employees on the payroll to facilitate their quick and full personal recoveries and working within the revenue-generating capabilities of the hotel will be challenging. Aspects of staffing that may arise along the road to recovery range from the possibility of having to temporarily dismiss team members with plans to rehire, to using potential idle time to invest in employee development and training.



COORDINATION WITH SALES AND MARKETING

Revenue management and sales and marketing plans cannot realistically account for unexpected events that alter market dynamics. Once a disaster occurs, most operators have contingency plans in place to direct logistics. Revenue management and sales managers can benefit from using complementary contingency plans during a crisis that focus on assessing the situation and providing flexible and cooperative responses and solutions across these departments. Expectations of when and to what extent supply and demand of both your property and the broader market will recover should be factored into your contingency revenue management and sales plans quickly as possible. Significant uncertainty around reopening of properties and rehabilitation of the market is likely, both on the supply-side and the demand-side. Damage to the structure of your hotel and its amenities, along with the status of necessary infrastructure and surrounding attractions, will largely dictate the timeline of the recovery process. When appropriate, revenue and sales managers should work closely with Tourism Associations and Visitors Bureaus to align the marketing of the overall recovery efforts with those of their individual property so the property can benefit from local efforts.

After a disaster, effective communication with customers and upcoming business will be of primary importance to sales managers. If your property is not operational, revenue management employees could support the sales staff by contacting meeting planners, tourism operators, and group planners with information about the property's status and expected recovery. In the longer-run, revenue managers could assist the sales and marketing departments through the recovery process by capitalizing on the use of social media. Consider posting updates and pictures of the rebuilding progress, sharing details of your recovery process, and using social media to understand and possibly influence demand.

If your property is operational, communication plans for revenue managers become more tactical and benefit from support provided by the sales and marketing departments. Working with marketing allows you to identify, reach, and communicate with your highest value guests. Revenue managers will want to use information from the sales team to determine how to best leverage traditional and social media outlets and platforms to communicate that your property is open for business.

SEGMENTATION, PRICING, AND DISTRIBUTION

A major shift in market dynamics could create a need to reevaluate segmentation, will certainly change prevailing pricing strategies, and may impact strategies for allocating room nights through your distribution network. In the case of a broad-scale disaster, both supply of and demand for hotel rooms may immediately collapse, only to be followed by a spike in demand due to humanitarian efforts, and then a long path to recovery of supply and the market's traditional demand. A more localized disaster may result in a different outcome, with limited change in long-term supply but a significant and immediate drop in demand.

In evaluating the post-shock market conditions of a property, revenue managers will want to pay close attention to how prices and customer segments have been impacted and how to ethically and effectively sell rooms. Discounting can create shifts in segments and too many price concessions can lead to lower-spend guests. Prepare short-term and long-term plans to revive occupancy over time without permanently impacting high-end segments. Monitor customer segmentation shifts to determine if changes are temporary or permanent. If the owner is rebuilding or significantly renovating the property, perform market research to understand the market position and price point of the hotel when it reopens.

Distribution channels will also be affected, as room functionality may be unknown, and room availability may need to be reserved for humanitarian efforts. In the time shortly following a disaster, it is important to make sure unavailable supply is removed from all distribution channels and that available supply is routed through the most appropriate channels. A significant interruption in your distribution channel strategy can possibly provide an opportunity to reevaluate and refresh your approach to distribution of room nights for sale.

COMPETITIVE SET

After a market shock, revenue managers will need to determine the post-shock operating conditions of competitors. Be prepared to closely watch your competitive set and understand that your legacy comp set might differ from either the most appropriate comp set today or the comp set you will have in the future. Your comp set may go through several iterations as previous competitors leave and new entrants bring properties online, so be sure to consider expanding the comp set you are watching and frequently revisit your analysis of competitors as the market re-stabilizes.

Newly-identified competitive set and your established one so you can track changes and trends of both. Looking toward the future, you will want to shift your focus to the recovery of the broader market and how your property will be positioned once recovery is complete.

The importance of what competitors are doing will vary, based on the operating status of your own property. If your property is available, an initial consideration will be looking at which competitors are also available and if the current state of the market requires that you change your comp set or even expand it to include previously distant competitors. When reassessing your hotel's competitive environment, it would be beneficial to differentiate between your

If your property is being rehabilitated and is not available, decisions related to your competitive set will be less urgent, but still strategic. You will want to consider if your property will be upgraded once reopened and if improvements will change the composition of your comp set. You will also want to pay attention to timelines, specifically when your property and your prior and future competitors are expected to come online relative to the rest of the market.

A photograph showing a person's hands working on a laptop and a stack of papers with charts and graphs. This represents a revenue manager performing demand forecasting and analyzing market data.

DEMAND FORECASTING

and the most appropriate way for a property to account for the demand shock when forecasting in the future.

Properties that require significant rehabilitation will have zero demand for a period, which eventually creates a gap in demand data. The outcome of the recovery depends on the damage to the property and the condition of the broader market. While some properties may experience a recovery to their previous baseline, other hotels may reopen in a different asset class or at a different price point. Revenue managers will need to consider how to adjust longer-term forecasts and forecasting methods to handle these potential data changes.

TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

A photograph showing a group of people around a table, looking at charts and graphs on papers. This represents a team working on technology systems and data analysis.

Most aspects of revenue management have strong ties to systems and technology, so the condition of a property's systems will impact the extent to which revenue manager can effectively make decisions after a disaster. While many immediate effects of systems failures relate to guest interaction and communication, revenue management systems considerations will eventually need to be addressed. Once you are able to form a plan to replace systems and account for missing data as needed, if your property has a pause in regular operations, likewise, if your property remains open, it will be operating in a different market dynamic that may require new or

and potentially revised systems. Segmenting and pricing strategies, competitive sets, forecasting methods, and technology systems are critical to making sure a property and its community can not only heal, but also thrive in the future.

REQUEST A DEMO

Rainmaker can help.



The Hotel Power Couple

Unlock Profitable Relationships
Between Revenue Management
and Marketing



TAMBOURINE The Tambourine logo, which consists of the word "TAMBOURINE" in a bold, sans-serif font next to a stylized 'T' icon that looks like a crown or a drum.



By opening up dialogue and working in sync, hotel marketing and revenue management teams can collaborate to win a larger share of today's travelers. Here's how to optimally align to compound value of each department and ultimately enhance your hotel's revenue opportunities.

All too often, revenue management and marketing teams operate in silos. Although the two disciplines use different tool sets and metrics to execute their strategy and measure their performance, they have a common goal: **driving net revenue**.

We've teamed up with hospitality experts to examine the challenges and methods to making revenue management and marketing teams powerful partners in profitability.

Pairing Up for More Profits

“Revenue Management and Marketing have evolved into very specific and sometimes dissonant entities that don’t always connect. The consequence of this disconnect is a failure to meet the hotel’s full revenue potential.” said Johnathan Capps, vice president of revenue for Charlestowne Hotels, a hospitality management company based in Charleston, S.C.

While both marketing and revenue management are vital to a hotel’s success, they typically operate with different perspectives and different tools to achieve the same goals. The question becomes, how much more powerful could the sum be, if these two groups practiced their disciplines in concert?

Jennifer Pochedly, corporate director of revenue management at OLS Hotels and Resorts agrees.

“If marketing and revenue management teams don’t communicate, they can end up working at cross purposes,” she said. **“Communication is absolutely critical to success.”**

With increasing levels of competition, more and more properties are vying for the same share of travel spending. Establishing a synergy between marketing and revenue management is the strongest weapon hotels have – allowing them to deftly capture new guests, retain existing customers and maximize spend from every stay.

Bringing together marketing teams and revenue managers could be an unexpected amplifier to profitability.



Stop Sleeping in Separate Beds

By knocking down departmental walls and silos, revenue management and marketing teams can compound their value and significantly enhance the hotel's revenue opportunities, particularly by partnering together to drive direct bookings from the hotel's most valuable guests.

Their roles, by nature, make them the perfect pair:

- **Revenue managers** can identify gaps in demand and pinpoint which guest segment – transient, corporate or group – is the most likely to generate more revenue during a property's need periods and whether any offer or promotion should be created
- **Marketing teams**, in turn, can create timely, targeted campaigns and execute segment and timing strategies to drive the required demand, powered with thorough knowledge of customer preferences and outreach vehicles



INDUSTRY EXPERTS



MISTY WISE
Corporate Director of
Ecommerce Strategies,
Atrium Hospitality

Misty Wise has 17 years of hospitality experience, including corporate level revenue management and most recently as the corporate director of ecommerce strategies. In her current role at Atrium Hospitality, she is responsible for strategically leveraging digital platforms and new technologies to drive business to 50 hotels. Previously, she served as corporate director of digital strategy and ecommerce at John Q. Hammons Hotels and Resorts.



JOHNATHAN CAPPS
Vice President of Revenue,
Charlestowne Hotel

Johnathan Capps oversees internal and external revenue management strategies at Charlestowne Hotels and works with corporate leadership to establish profitability enhancement methods for the company's portfolio of properties. Prior to joining Charlestowne Hotels, Capps was director of revenue at Wild Dunes Resort in Isle of Palms, S.C.



JENNIFER POCHEDLY
Corporate Director of
Revenue Management,
OLS Hotels & Resorts

Jennifer Pochedly oversees all on-site general managers and revenue managers at OLS properties, makes pricing and distribution strategy recommendations, and works closely with corporate resources and external research organizations to project market trends. Prior to joining OLS Hotels & Resorts, Pochedly was revenue manager at Le Parc Suite Hotel in West Hollywood, Calif.

PRO HOTEL MARKETING TIP

Hotel owners and asset managers are now holding marketers accountable for generating revenue. So, it's vital to have the right pricing data to generate the most revenue from your marketing offers.



Align & Win Back Bookings

Together, revenue managers and marketers are the strongest team to drive business to the hotel's own direct-booking website, its most profitable channel.

Direct business has a major impact on hotel revenues. It can deliver a full package of benefits:

Guests who book directly can be exposed to more of your brand, as your website guides them through your amenities and your imagery sparks their imagination. An obvious plus is you reduce potentially pricey third-party commissions. But, most importantly, you own all the customer data when guests book direct. This results in a robust guest database that could stimulate recurring revenue for years to come.

We spent time with Misty Wise, corporate director of ecommerce strategies at Atrium Hospitality to get some “in the trenches” perspective on the real power of the marketing and revenue management power couple.

“ **Teams who identify, then bridge, the gaps in data between marketing and revenue management will have a distinct advantage in driving market share.”**

MISTY WISE
Corp. Director of Ecommerce Strategies, Atrium Hospitality



A Partnership in Progress

Wise acknowledges that the partnership between hotel revenue management and marketing is still evolving.

Different hotels and hotel management firms have various programs in place. One of the hurdles many companies face is the absence of on-property hotel marketing managers. A rare crossover of both hotel marketing and revenue management skills and insight, Wise was candid about the need to educate herself when moving from revenue management responsibilities to digital marketing.

“Revenue management and marketing are two different worlds – revenue management is well-established, while marketing continues to evolve.” Wise said. “Moving from one discipline to another is similar to immersing yourself in a new culture and learning a new language.” For the best synergy, she advocates for both revenue managers and marketers to carve out time to educate themselves on their counterpart’s work.

“If these roles continue to operate in different worlds, without shared data, objectives won’t be achieved and results will fall short of expectations.”

“Today, revenue managers are tasked to think like marketers and marketers need to think like analysts,” says Wise.

“Revenue managers are tasked to think like marketers and marketers need to think like analysts.”



Capps supports this position, acknowledging that the relationship between revenue management and marketing has come a long way in recent years, both industry-wide and at his company, Charlestowne Hotels.

“ *Here [at Charlestowne Hotels], we evaluate the relationship often and our hotels succeed as a result of our commitment to fully integrate revenue and marketing efforts.”* he said. He also noted that Charlestowne’s corporate office is set up so that the marketing and revenue management departments are next to each other. *“My team and I cross paths with marketing counterparts multiple times throughout the day”* said Capps. *“Together,*

our blended teams work together through many shared applications and develop comprehensive strategies that merge revenue’s detailed analysis with marketing’s experiential creative.”

Underscoring the point, Pochedly said OLS Hotels & Resorts is constantly working to get the revenue management and marketing departments in sync.

“ *When we meet with our hotel properties, we’re doing it together, so we can talk about how we’re branded, whether we need to make changes, what promotions we need, and how we can dive in to make things better.”*



The Danger of Staying Solo

Wise presented a likely scenario: Imagine a property that is battling dwindling revenue share. In response, the revenue manager and the marketing manager spend days preparing separate strategies, without collaborating or understanding the other’s insight or knowledge.

The **REVENUE MANAGER** uses revenue management data to determine a low average rate index is at fault. As a result, the revenue manager decides to manage demand to optimize rate efficiency.

The **DIRECTOR OF MARKETING** uses marketing data to determine that there is high demand for discounted business. So, the marketing team allocates marketing dollars to new strategies and targets this lower rated demand through advertising.

“ *While they are both working towards the same goal of increasing market share, they’re both headed to failure,”* Wise said.

The director of marketing will drive occupancy, but see low conversions since the revenue manager placed fences on lower rated demand, therefore wasting marketing dollars. The revenue manager will not realize the full potential of their strategy without the proper support from marketing analytics.

Leverage Each Other's Strengths and Intelligence

What is at the foundation of a profitable hotel?

“ *It all starts with strategy and great strategies start with data,”* Wise explains.

Each department holds keys to data that could drive more hotel revenue. Often, however, revenue managers and marketing managers keep this intelligence within their own departments. Bridging those data gaps and removing barriers that separate the two groups will allow for enhanced performance across the revenue continuum.

Hotel marketers need to implement a data-driven approach to their marketing campaigns, and understand the profitability behind them. Successful marketing relies on greater insight into purchasing patterns and the history of demand from each core market segment.

Both departments need to be equipped, informed and in solid agreement on how to maximize the hotel’s profitability through strategic revenue management and marketing initiatives.

“ *Ideally, marketing has a seat at the table for all revenue optimization meetings and a voice in strategy. Revenue management has a seat at the table for all marketing meetings, access to relevant marketing analytics and a voice in where to deploy marketing strategies,”* said Wise. **”**

Marketing data and analytics should drive a revenue manager’s strategic decisions. Revenue Management data and analytics should drive the targeting and timing of marketing campaigns

UNDERSTAND EACH ROLE

Marketing connects with customers directly to drive demand and focuses on customer acquisition and retention, the guest experience, marketing channels and the brand.

Revenue Management tracks historic demand and buying patterns, and analyze current pick-up behavior, then targets areas of priority with profitable pricing strategies.

The exchange and flow of information between marketing and revenue management should be constant. Revenue management and marketing both have data that could prove valuable to their sister group.

Explore a few specific data points that revenue management can share with marketing and vice-versa, to increase the efficiency of both departments and ultimately result in a more effective cross-pollination to drive measurable revenue growth.

The Big Eight: Revenue Management Has It, Marketing Needs It

1. Trends in purchasing behavior

Our experts agree that technology is changing the marketing and revenue management landscapes. Consumers are increasingly turning to mobile devices to make travel decisions on the fly.

Although mobile research is on the rise, consumers continue to book via desktop. Due to this purchasing behavior it is not necessary to execute a campaign focused on mobile discounts.



Hotels that want to position themselves for success must take this into consideration, asking the following questions:

- Do I have the right website to adequately support mobile-first users?
- Do I have the right offers?
- Is my highest value guest truly a last-minute guest?

For example, marketing may execute a campaign that is focused on driving demand 90 days out, when in fact, the hotel is in general, a 30-day-out property.

2. Identifying periods of weakness to avoid a last-minute crisis

Clearly, identifying your property's periods of weakness in advance helps you avoid crisis-driven rate-cutting and last-minute campaigning. Pochedly says that identifying periods of weakness in order to avoid crisis situations is critical.

“ *We know if we can have more on the books seven days before arrival, we won’t have to drop rates,” she said.*

Sample scenario:

Christmas is slow in Los Angeles, so OLS creates package promotions and ‘members-only’ promotions. *“You layer it and try to get the most business you can,”* according to Pochedly.

Capps said Charlestowne Hotels also plans well in advance for slow periods. *“We know what’s in the pipeline, so when there’s a period of weakness, we can just tweak an offer or adjust a campaign to make it more targeted.”*

He said it’s also important to identify trends and patterns, both in demographics and geographic regions. It may be that certain patterns emerge at the same time each year, for example, and the property can make the necessary adjustments.

Yet, even with the best planning, emergency situations can occur.

“ *We’ve learned that as much as you try, things happen,” said Capps. “That’s why it’s so important for revenue management and marketing to have a close working relationship. If you have that, then dealing with a crisis becomes much easier.”*





3. Data to help marketing target more effectively

Capps says it's critical for the revenue management department to share data that can help the marketing team target customers more effectively. Which dates, segments, seasons, and channels are performing the best? Which rooms are bringing in the most revenue?

“Revenue management must keep marketing in the loop at all times,” he says. And, while revenue management and marketing have different perspectives, they must ultimately set a common goal if they are to be successful, *“In the revenue world, it’s about following the data; in the marketing world, it’s about A-B testing. Merging these two worlds means starting with a goal and then checking in often so that adjustments can be made in order to reach that goal.”*

Capps also notes that many disparate elements are involved in this process. For example, if the hotel's goal is to grow its 'book direct website' channel, then the funds, the content, and the vendors that go behind it must line up, as well as the pricing strategy, booking engine strategy and promotion strategy.

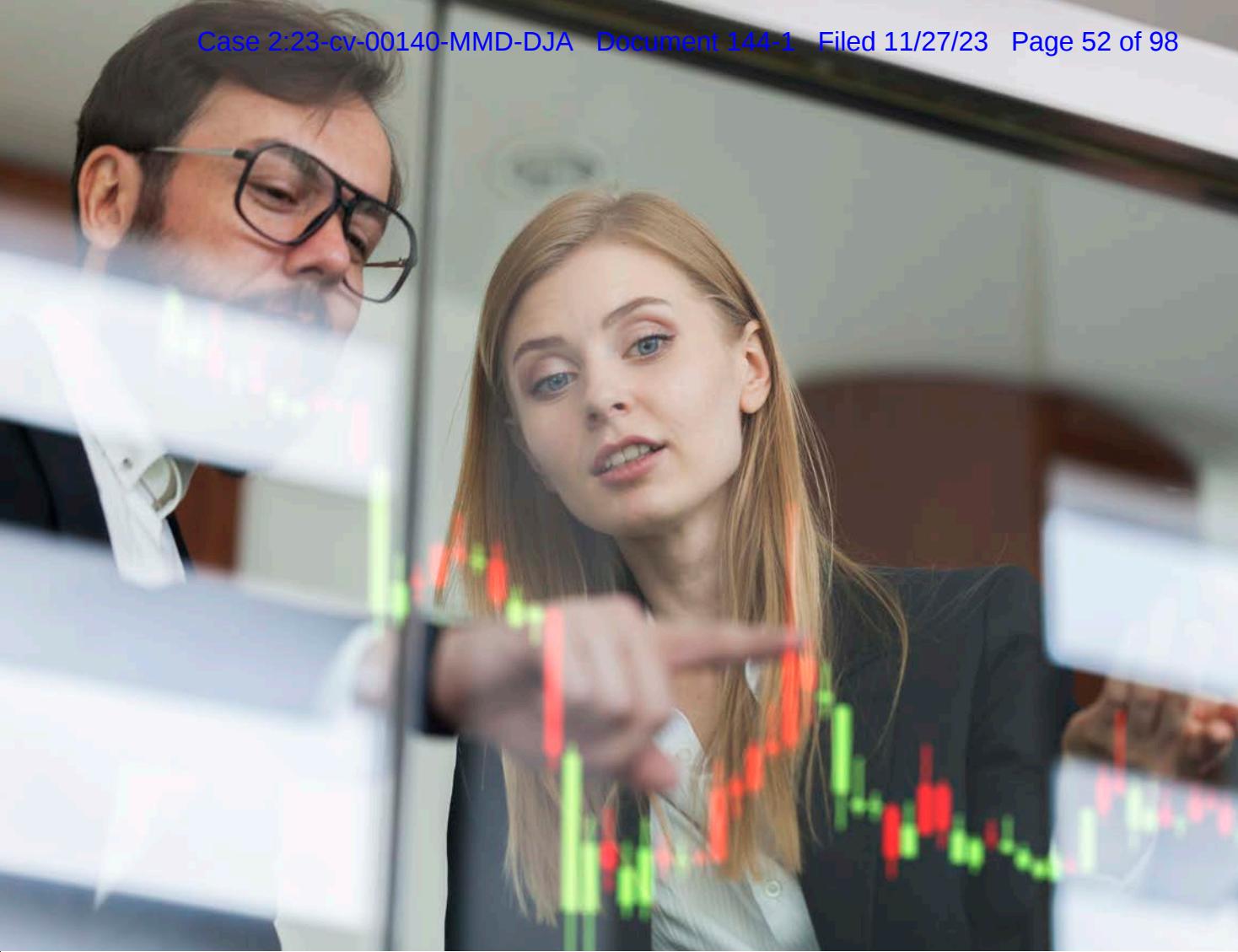
4. Analytics to help marketing tailor campaigns to the hotel's most valuable targets at the right time through the right marketing channels

Data, not intuition, enables the marketing team to craft campaigns. And the better the data, the more accurately the property can target its most valuable guests at precisely the right time and through the most effective marketing channels.

Strategic revenue management considers the total value of each guest based on all available revenue streams, including food and beverage, wellness, gaming and retail. Analytics that provide a 360-degree view of the guest enable the property not only to predict future behavior but also to tailor marketing campaigns that hit the right note at the appropriate time and through the most effective channels.

At OLS, the revenue management and marketing teams meet weekly to review the data.

“We look at rate code analysis and country analysis. Most importantly, we look at the market-to-market code analysis to make sure they are all producing properly.”



5. The reports RM works with each day

Both Capps and Pochedly work with a variety of reports each day, including property management system and revenue intelligence reports, analytics reports, CRM data and social media data, blog pickup, forecast vs budget pacing, STR Report.

6. The details and timing of revenue management-driven campaigns executed in partnership with OTAs and other third parties

Pochedly says she sees a dip in the brand whenever she runs campaigns on the OTAs.

“If you want to focus on brand, then running campaigns on OTAs is obviously not a great idea. I only utilize these strategies when absolutely necessary.” She says she always keeps marketing in the loop, so they are aware of what’s going on. **“I always tell ownership, too, and let them know that we’re fighting for business right now.”** For Capps, it goes back to sharing at key points and having overlapping data. **“Marketing is aware of any promotions happening via third parties; and, we’re doing things with partners that we wouldn’t offer to guests directly.”** Again, it’s keeping marketing in the loop. They should always be aware of promotions happening via third parties.



7. Knowledge of research and booking window

Pochedly, Capps and Wise agree that it's critical for the marketing and revenue management departments to share information about booking pace.

“We discuss how many reservations are coming in during our regularly scheduled calls,” said Pochedly. Capps extends on that adding that it's important to understand that the booking window is constantly changing and shortening. **“Understanding the booking window allows marketing to target messages to guests at exactly the right time,”** he said. **“It’s also important to understand the difference between a searching guest and a guest with intent to book,”** he said **“It all goes back to when a guest books and how far out.”**

8. Which segments need more attention and when – leisure, group or corporate?

Pochedly says the time of year plays a big role in the segments OLS targets. During December, for example, the company focuses on leisure travelers.

She said the day of the week also factors into the decision-making process. Most corporate travelers arrive on Tuesday and Wednesday, whereas most leisure travelers arrive on the weekend.

She also notes the industry is seeing an increasing number of 'bleisure' travelers – people who combine business with leisure. There's opportunity to market to these consumers with special weekend promotions.

Capps said Charlestowne Hotels is heavy in the leisure market. **“We keep up with all the trends, but especially those in that segment.”**

What Marketers Need to Share with Revenue Managers

Marketing focuses on customer acquisition and retention, the guest experiences and the brand.

“The analytics behind marketing are undeniable,” said Wise. **“Once you start aligning with your revenue manager, you can have a significant impact on your bottom line.”**

According to Wise, hotel marketers should inform revenue managers of:

1. New and Emerging Marketing Methods

Supply your knowledge of all viable hotel marketing methods and opportunities. Then, Wise says work with your revenue managers to decide which methods and target audiences are best to drive revenue through these new sources.

Sample scenario:

You suddenly have distressed inventory. In the past, a hotel may turn to deeply discounting rates to occupy rooms. Today, a digital marketer can offer advertising solutions to promote retail or marginally discounted rates to targeted audiences with an immediate call to action.

2. Current Customer Buying Behaviors

Use industry tools to track online visitor behaviors, then deliver relevant marketing



messages to the right audience, at the right time, to the right place, and – with the help of your revenue manager, the right price. Keep revenue managers up-to-date with what your customer data reveals, like purpose of guest visits, preferred methods of booking, influences and expectations.

Sample scenario:

Marketing can be delivered to finely detailed audiences. Consider a hotel that boasts high demand for ethnic celebrations. Their marketing analytics revealed the geographical region where searches for these types of events originated. The hotel combines this intelligence with other analytics, which now allows the property to tailor promotions specific to the demand driver, market to them and track results.

3. Most Lucrative Marketing Channels

Track which channels are bringing in the most traffic at the highest rate with the lowest overhead and then work with your revenue manager to leverage these channels to grow revenue by segment.

4. Demographics of Most Engaged Guests

Report back to your revenue management team with traffic source details, including where guest travel from, how long they stay and what they purchase on property.

This gives revenue managers the insight to create profitable pricing strategies targeting these audiences.

Sample scenario:

If 75 percent of your followers are women aged 35-40, a package or promotion that targets demographics outside of that is less likely to produce revenue.

5. International vs domestic booking trends

Capps said he looks to marketing to tell him about the geographic composition of guests.

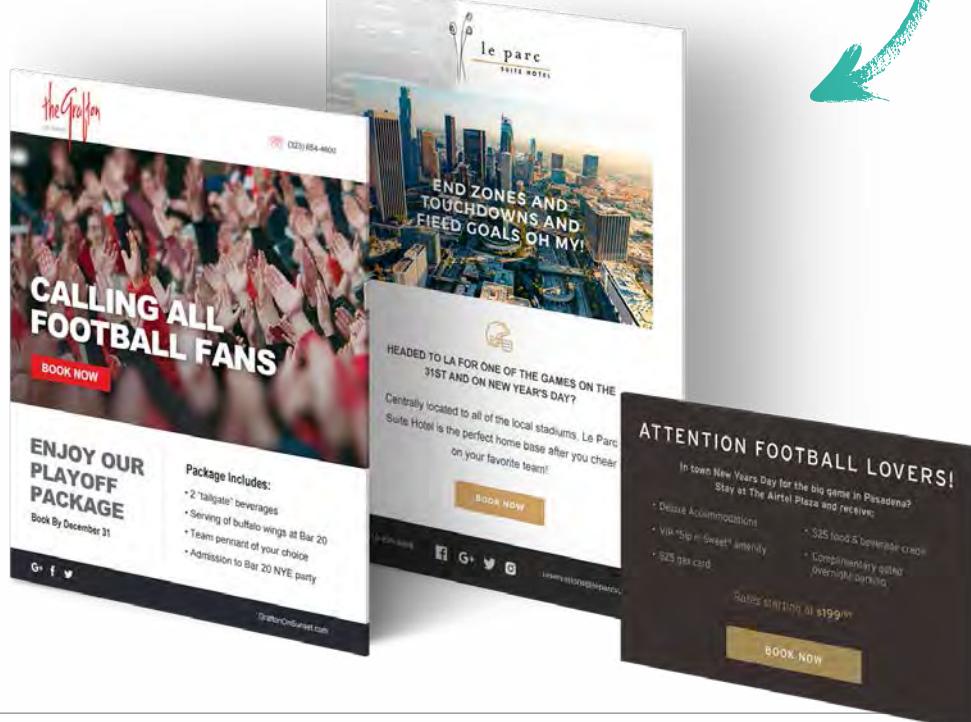
Pochedly says that OLS uses geo-targeted ads to target both domestic and international consumers, particularly surrounding major events.

Contrary to domestic consumers, International consumers have a higher length of stay and a lower cancellation rate. Domestic consumers are a more appropriate target to capture last minute business.

Sample Scenarios:

OLS pushed out a geo-targeted ad to Brazil when a major soccer tournament was held in Los Angeles that brought in many Brazilians.

Prior to the 2018 Rose Bowl, OLS sent geo-targeted ads to the states of Georgia and Oklahoma, both of which had teams playing in the game.



6. Current and Upcoming Marketing Campaigns

Wise advises against moving forward with new marketing campaigns without collaborating with the revenue optimization team. “Sales and revenue can share data and contribute insights on key points including booking and stay pattern data. Many times marketing and revenue analytics have similar data reported on booked vs stayed and paid. Both are valuable. You lose the full power of the data without collaboration.”

7. Marketing Reports

Show revenue managers the “whole picture” by disclosing these vital marketing metrics and reports:

- a. Website traffic and analytics
- b. Paid search results
- c. Search engine ranking results
- d. Traffic summary
- e. Email marketing campaign results
- f. Social media activity and results
- g. Channel contribution
- h. Guest review/sentiment
- i. OTA analytics
- j. Historical and future performance compared to competitive set (using a modern rate shopping solution)



Driving Revenue Together

Keys to a Powerful Revenue Optimization Team

The lines between both departments are blurring.

“Both marketers and revenue managers must take the initiative to educate themselves on the others’ world,” Wise recommends. This includes trends, technology, and tactics. Her tips include: Follow influencers from both fields, join organizations such as HSMAI, find free resources online, listen to podcasts. **“Spend time understanding your counterparts,”** she advises, **“and it will enhance strategy and drive results.”**



Build the Optimal Revenue Management/ Hotel Marketing Power Couple

• Attend Industry Tradeshows Together

Present a unified front at industry events. Work together to showcase comprehensive insight into your markets and profit potential to partners and clients. Brainstorm how to best reach out to customers, then offer marketing knowledge and tools to revenue management customers and revenue insights and tools to marketing partners.

• Share Expectations and Frustrations

Not only does frequent face-to-face interaction between colleagues facilitate trust, it ultimately creates greater collaboration and understanding. These benefits do not occur through email or text, but through authentic in-person interactions.

• Bring The Group Together for Teambuilding

One of the best ways to see more ROI from your team is to have fun. Teambuilding can mitigate conflicts, boost trust, encourage communication, and improve collaboration – making it one of the smartest investments towards boosting your hotel's bottom line. Spending time outside the office and sharing a memorable experience allows bonding to happen effectively and organically.

“There is no final destination. You should continue to educate and empower your teams to collaborate and align strategies.” said Wise.

WE RECOMMEND:



A DECADE OF DATA

HOTEL DATA
CONFERENCE

August 15-17, 2018 | Omni Nashville Hotel

Hosted by STR and Hotel News Now

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SUMMARY:

Best Practices

1) Live in your 'go-to' data and routines:

Have a set routine to start your day, especially when it comes to reviewing the daily numbers for your property.

2) Find time to challenge the norms

This refers to things like segmentation, room types and channel performance. It takes some deep dives into those. Analyze what you're seeing and make sure the behavior you're seeing there is what you're accustomed to seeing.

3) Cross-collaborate

Make sure the revenue management and marketing teams regularly review all the data, not just the metrics from their own departments. Also, get input from the sales and operations teams. Everyone should be on the same page.

4) Understand the acquisition cost and impact of OTA commissions on the property

It's important to know how the revenue flows to the bottom line.

5) Be willing to take chances

Although systems and data can point you in a particular direction, the revenue manager must be willing to take an occasional chance.

“Revenue managers are often gun-shy rather than trigger-happy,” Capps said. **“Sometimes, you need to strike while the iron is hot. If you’re not willing to take a chance, you’ll miss a lot of opportunities.”**

6) Build revenue & expense budgets together

According to Capps, at Charlestowne Hotels, revenue and expense budgets are created in tandem. Then, there are required working sessions where the departments get together and review everything. Pochedly also says it's especially important for revenue management and marketing to work together to build budgets at OLS.



7) Agree on monthly and rolling forecasts together

When it comes to monthly and rolling forecasts, Capps said there should be collaboration on reviewing and completing them. Pochedly agrees that both the marketing and revenue teams, along with the general manager and controller, should be involved in the process.

“*You have to work together to have a successful forecast,” she said. “You also have to know what’s in the pipeline – groups, promotions, F&B components. It’s hugely important to be as complete and accurate as possible.”*

8) Conduct on-going business reviews together

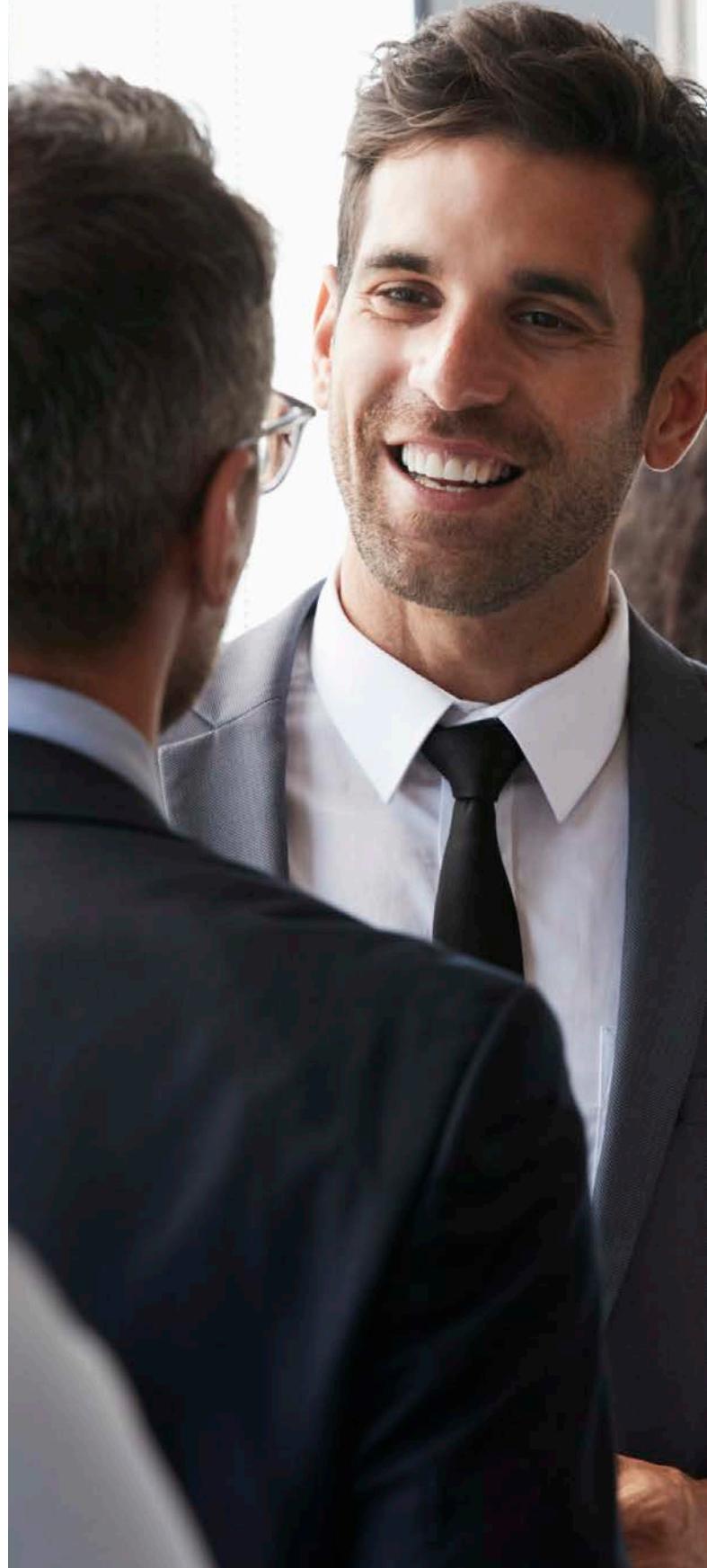
As a management company with many properties, Charlestowne Hotels uses online support systems that enable teams to communicate and share with each other or to ‘tag’ someone on a to-do list. Capps notes that one of the company’s best practices is to use tools to communicate.

“*A weekly in-person meeting isn’t always possible. So, having technology that facilitates communication is critical to success.”*

OLS holds weekly meetings where revenue management and marketing review everything:

i. Examine periods of weakness

All of our experts note the importance of knowing the property’s down periods and being prepared. *“Organization is essential,”* said Capps. *“So often, people are scrambling to get on the same page. But, if you have*





the right tools and systems in place, then it's all about what the response will be versus who is going to handle it."

ii. *Identify segments that are causing the shortfall* - Pochedly says it's critical to keep an eye on trends. *"Otherwise, you can end up in trouble."*

For Capps, it goes back to goals and budgeting. *"Don't just check in at the beginning and the end,"* he advises. *"There must be key scheduled dates in-between, at least a monthly meeting between marketing and revenue management."* He also notes the importance of not having to search for information. *"Internally, there should be a place to access data in some sort of presentation format."*

9) *Determine what can be done as a unified team. Then, do it.*

Wise, Pochedly and Capps all agree that organization and systems are critical for success. At Charlestowne Hotels, efficiencies in reporting make it easy for marketers and revenue managers to see what's going on at a given property.

“ *A segmentation report for a hotel in California is formatted exactly like the segmentation report for a resort in South Carolina,” Capps said. “So, people know where to look and they know what they’re looking at, regardless of the property.”*



The Rainmaker Group is the premier provider of revenue and profit optimization solutions to the Hospitality and Gaming industry.

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AWARDS AND AFFILIATIONS



Tambourine is an instrumental partner for elite hoteliers, hotel management and asset management firms seeking to outperform their compset, improve bottom line profitability and decrease OTA-dependence.

Our team utilizes our own best-in-class technology to empower your property... giving you the confidence and ability to achieve your ownership's revenue goals.

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AWARDS AND AFFILIATIONS



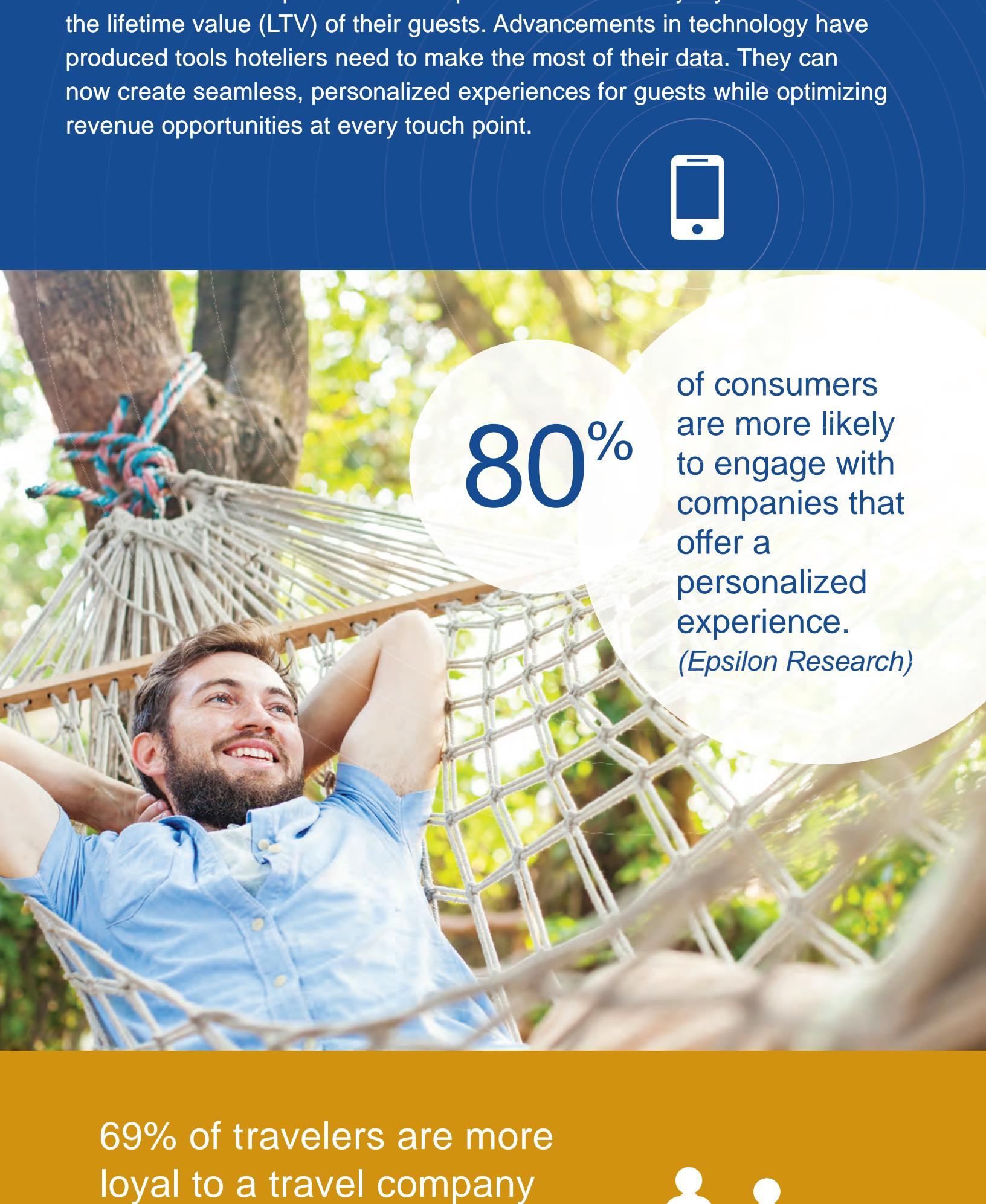
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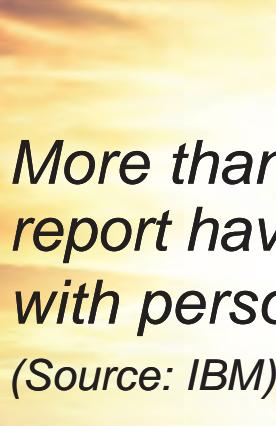
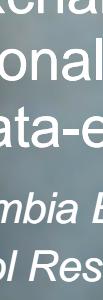
THE NEW ERA OF DATA-DRIVEN GUEST EXPERIENCES

How the vast amount of your hotel data can help personalize the guest experience.



TO STAY COMPETITIVE,

Hotels must deliver personalized experiences to build loyalty and maximize the lifetime value (LTV) of their guests. Advancements in technology have produced tools hoteliers need to make the most of their data. They can now create seamless, personalized experiences for guests while optimizing revenue opportunities at every touch point.



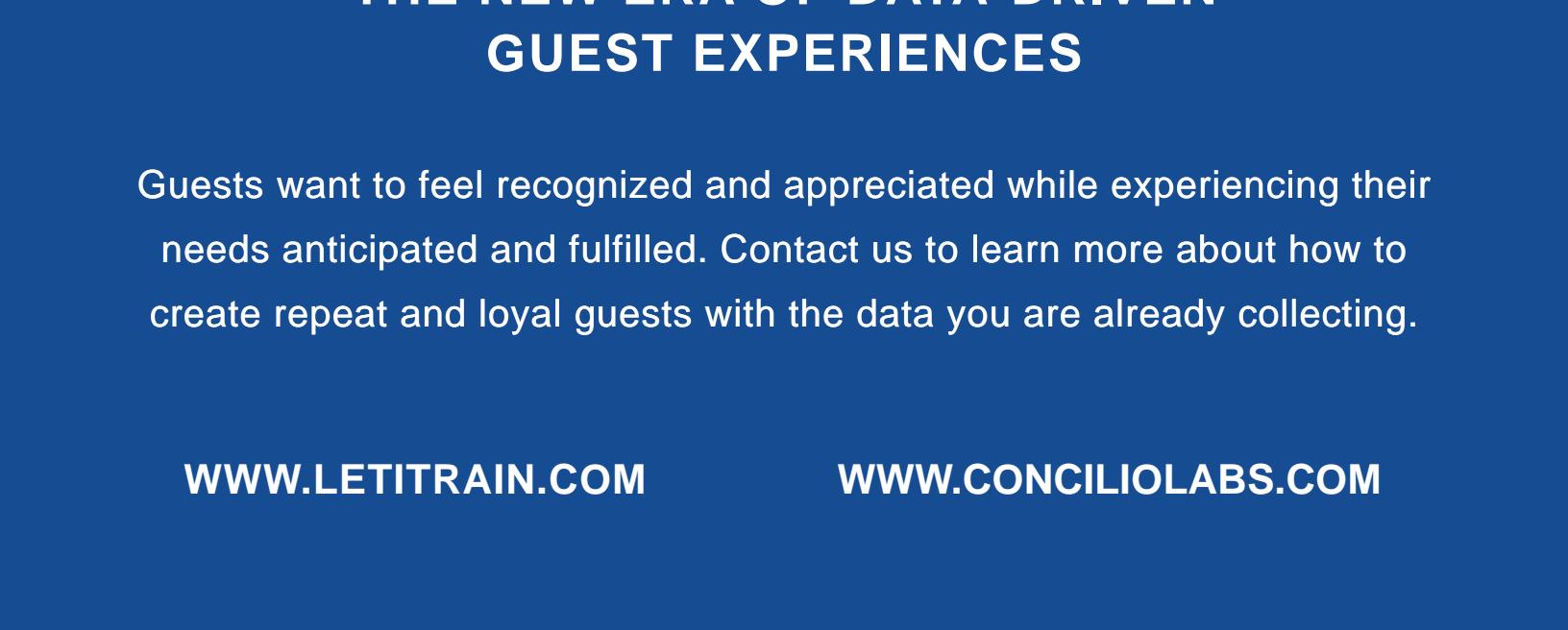
86% of guests want to select their room based on personal preferences. (Zebra Hospitality)



Increasing personalization can increase consumer spending up to 500%. (The E-Tailing Group)



75% of consumers are more likely to buy from brands that recognize them by name, recommends services based on past purchases, and knows their purchase history. (Source: Accenture)



THE NEW ERA OF DATA-DRIVEN GUEST EXPERIENCES

More than 70% of hotel guests report having positive experiences with personalization.

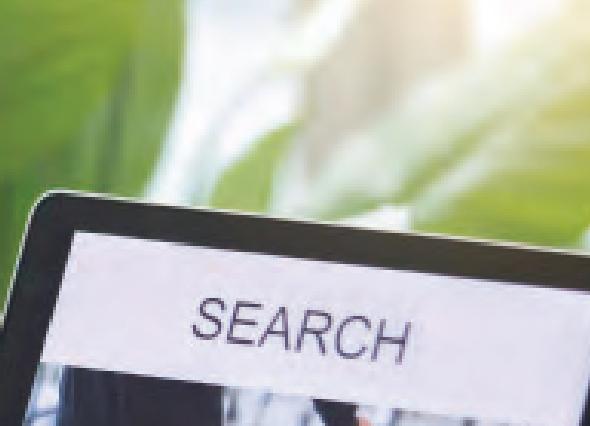
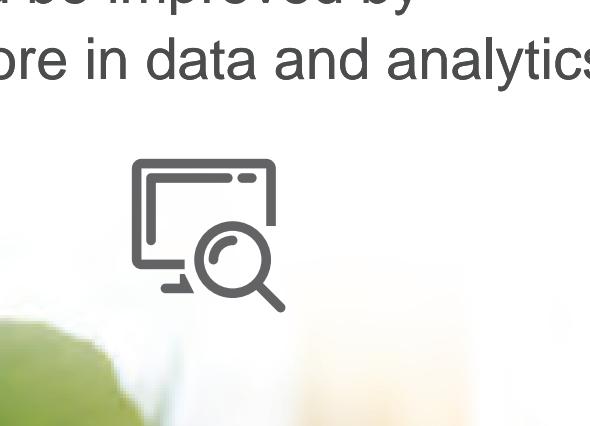
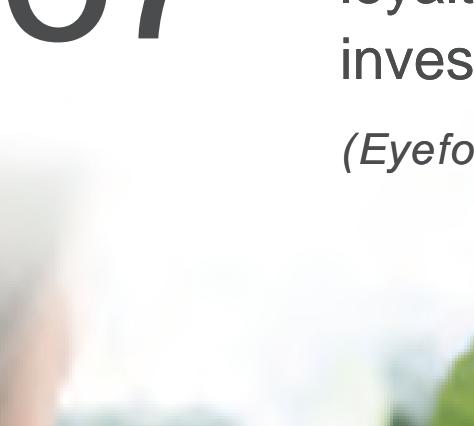
(Source: IBM)

67% of travel brands indicated that customer loyalty could be improved by investing more in data and analytics.

(EyeForTravel)



Guests want to feel recognized and appreciated while experiencing their needs anticipated and fulfilled. Contact us to learn more about how to create repeat and loyal guests with the data you are already collecting.





The 2018 Smart Decision Guide™ to Hospitality Revenue Management

Everything you need to know about Hospitality Revenue Management – and how to select the right solution and/or services for your organization



Underwritten, in part, by:



Independently produced
and distributed by:



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Introduction

"You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows," sang Bob Dylan in his classic 1965 song "Subterranean Homesick Blues." He was right. Knowing which way the wind will blow in the future, on the other hand, is a whole different matter. It requires not only a weatherman, or meteorologist, but also massive amounts of data and computational processing power. Accurate weather forecasting means knowing the temperature, humidity, air pressure, soil moisture and wind speed at many different points and elevations. The predictive model may also call for multiple other types of data sourced from historic observations of the atmosphere and underlying surfaces. In addition, accurate weather forecasting requires advanced technologies like Doppler and dual polarization radar and next-generation analytic software. As a result, seven-day weather forecasts today are more accurate than were 24-hour forecasts only a couple of decades ago.

By the same token, you don't need a revenue manager to know how many guests are currently checking into a hotel. However, knowing how many guests will likely check into a hotel a few weeks or a few months out — and knowing what types of guests they will be, what kinds of rooms they will want, how much they will be willing to pay to stay at the hotel and how much they will likely spend during their stay — presents a much bigger challenge. Accurately forecasting guest room demand by segment, room type and rate, and ensuring that the hotel maximizes the value of guests through optimized pricing tactics, may be even harder than accurately forecasting the weather.

What is certain is that in a dynamic market characterized by ever-changing numbers, patterns and results, it is impossible to optimize room rates and overall revenue outcomes without the right data from a diversity of relevant sources. It is also impossible to do so without a next-generation hospitality revenue management solution. The good news is that some of these solutions have become extremely sophisticated and effective, fueled by the rapid growth of big data processing, demand forecasting and pricing optimization models. The best of these solutions have the ability to generate pricing strategies based on real-time

The best revenue management solutions can generate pricing strategies based on real-time analysis of all relevant data, automating the decision-making process for pricing rooms.

Introduction

analysis of all relevant data, automating the decision-making process for pricing rooms, driving increased revenue per available room (RevPAR), and finally giving hotel operators the level of inventory management control that has eluded the hotel industry since its initial foray into revenue management, and especially with the proliferation of the OTAs.

Also commonly known as *yield management*, *demand pricing*, *dynamic pricing*, *time-based pricing* and (in the world of ridesharing services) *surge pricing*, the concept of revenue management is hardly a new one. But the techniques and enabling technologies that hotel operators used even a decade ago were extremely rudimentary by today's standards — and, certainly, a far cry from next-generation platform capabilities that harness the power of data and analytical models to automate the decision-making process for pricing and distribution.

Today, most hotel operators view the need to progressively improve their revenue management capabilities as a strategic imperative worthy of garnering ever-increasing amounts of attention and resources, given the opportunity to improve financial performance in highly predictable ways. For most hotel operators, the investment in upgrading their revenue management capabilities has paid off in spades. In fact, according to research conducted for this Smart Decision Guide, large and very large hotels have enjoyed, on average, a 10 percent increase in RevPAR, often resulting in millions of dollars in additional profit. Midsize and limited service hotels have fared only slightly less favorably, with a 7 percent average increase in RevPAR.

Of course, not all revenue management initiatives are the same. Different approaches, technologies and resources produce dramatically different results. This Smart Decision Guide offers hotel operators a framework for upgrading their revenue management capabilities and insights for selecting the right solution in the context of their hotel or resort's specific needs. It also offers practical advice for putting the right resources, processes and metrics in place to maximize success and drive continuous performance improvement.

The solutions automate the decision-making process, driving increased revenue from all parts of the hotel property while giving hoteliers greater inventory management control.

Chapter 1

Topic Overview and Key Concepts



Chapter 1: Topic Overview

In his seminal 2004 book *The Wisdom of Crowds*, author James Surowiecki wrote about the economics of movie theaters. He observed that when it comes to maximizing profits, flat movie ticket pricing is a fundamentally flawed approach. That's because consumer demand for a movie varies in predictable ways depending on any number of factors, including the movie's release date, its cumulative Rotten Tomatoes score, its expected popularity (e.g., in the case of a sequel in a hit franchise), its production cost, its star power, how long the movie has been in theaters and whether it has received any major awards or nominations. Yet movie ticket prices have seldom fluctuated. According to the author, the failure of theaters to develop a flexible pricing model based on demand has been "one of the more perplexing examples of the triumph of convention over rationality."

If the goal is to maximize revenue — which, of course, it is — then static movie ticket pricing simply makes no sense. That is why, however belatedly, major movie theaters are now testing the waters with variable ticket pricing. Regal Entertainment Group, the second largest movie theater chain in the United States, just announced plans to test a new pricing model designed to drive incremental revenue in peak periods and incremental attendance in nonpeak periods. Not wanting to leave money on the table, major theme park operators, including Disney and Universal Studios, are also getting into the demand-based pricing game. Tickets cost up to 20 percent more during peak periods than during slower periods. With consumers having come to accept the idea of variable pricing — thanks, in large part, to the popularity of ridesharing services like Uber and Lyft that hike transportation rates when demand is higher (much as the airline industry has done for decades) — industries ranging from rental car providers to parking lot operators are turning their attention to advanced revenue management tactics.

For hotel operators, the challenge of revenue management is particularly complex. It has become increasingly so as the basic approach to pricing guest rooms has evolved from a technique that uses "best available rate" (BAR) pricing to one that uses dynamic pricing based on data-driven demand forecasts. BAR pricing yields one primary rate with tiered percentage or flat amount based discounts off BAR differentiating prices across distribution channels. The discounts are usually fixed

The challenge of revenue management has become increasingly complex as the basic approach to pricing guest rooms has evolved beyond "best available rate" (BAR) pricing techniques.

Chapter 1: Topic Overview

percentages that move up or down on different dates. Next-generation techniques, on the other hand, make dynamic pricing and distribution decisions based not on BAR, but, rather, on real-time analysis of multiple data sources. At a minimum, these data sources generally include the hotel's own historical data, its booking site data, competitor pricing data and competitive set and digital review data, much of which is available within the revenue management solution from third-party providers. With data access and technology capabilities having evolved almost beyond recognition, hotel operators today have the opportunity to achieve the ultimate promise of revenue optimization: *to sell the right space at the right price at the right time to the right guest.*

In this context, *space* has commonly referred to guest rooms. Large hotels may have dozens of room types. For a long time, revenue management was all about filling empty rooms with paying guests. Today, the goal is no longer just about increasing guest room occupancy, with no consideration given to the pricing decisions in terms of the long-term implications. Nor is it just about rooms. Business and social event function space, recreational facilities, restaurants and spas also now factor into the equation. According to the Center for Exhibition Industry Research, demand for function space is growing at up to quadruple the rate of supply, with the daily cost per attendee having increased by 4.5 percent last year. For some hotels, function space revenue may account for more than half of the property's total revenue.

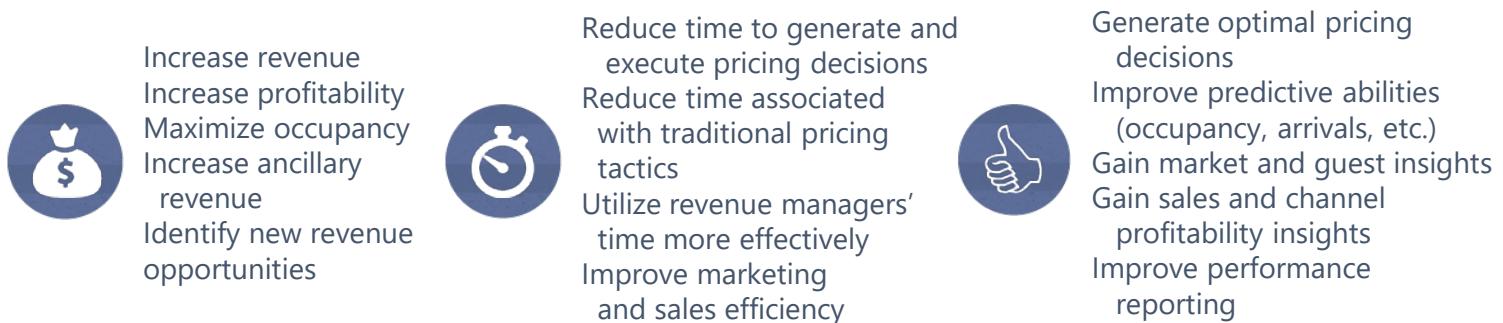
Price refers to room rate, which may be influenced by multiple factors, including how far in advance the reservation is booked and what the hotel's competitors are charging. Importantly, revenue management now involves optimizing profitability and not just revenue. It means analyzing ancillary revenue streams (e.g., food and beverage as well as golf, spa, etc.) along with related cost data to understand profit contributions by guest segment. For hotels with casino operations, even the "theoretical loss" (the amount of money a player can be expected to lose during their stay) can factor into the pricing model.

Guests, which may include individuals as well as groups, can be grouped together using meaningful segmentation schemes. Guests who book through a discount site, who purchased a package deal or who took advantage of a special rate promotion

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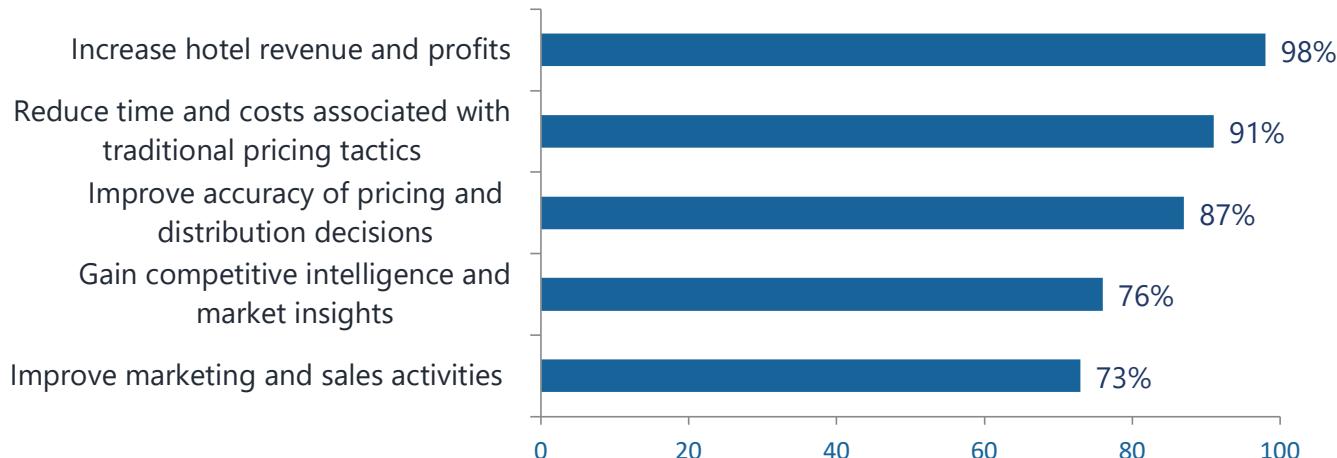
may, for example, be grouped together for price sensitivity. Length-of-stay is another criteria for factoring pricing. So, too, can the extent to which guests utilize the spa, casino or other facilities. Business travelers usually have different wants and needs than leisure travelers and thus may be grouped together. Guest segmentation lays the foundation for revenue management.

Given the sheer volume of data, it is no longer feasible for revenue managers to spend their time manually reviewing one forecasting and demand report after another and analyzing mountains of data in their quest to make better pricing and inventory control decisions. Next-generation revenue management solutions allow revenue managers to focus their efforts on more strategic tasks and allows hotels to generate better business results. The ability to automate pricing and distribution decisions makes the business case an easy one from an ROI perspective. In addition to improving RevPAR and other key performance indicators, hotels can improve marketing and sales effectiveness, generate competitive intelligence, and gain insights into occupancy trends, guest demographics, market positioning and channel profitability.



Research Data Point

What are the biggest benefits one can expect to gain with next-generation hospitality revenue management?



Research findings are derived from the Q4 2017 survey on Hospitality Revenue Management.

Chapter 1: Key Concepts

When it comes to evaluating platform capabilities, it is a good idea to include someone with revenue management expertise in the decision-making process. That said, one can gain a good understanding of next-generation capabilities without knowing how to analyze statistics and yield data to identify market trends, pinpoint new business opportunities and minimize risk — and without working knowledge of *yield exemptions, capacity management, duration control, overbooking practices* and *displacement analysis*. This section provides a cursory overview of some of the key concepts related to revenue management practices, starting with the ever-evolving performance metrics that are commonly used to track and measure success.

Relevant data sources. When it comes to data, revenue managers today have an embarrassment of riches. There is practically no end to the number of internal and third-party data sources at their disposal. The question is: What data is relevant to the model? Almost everyone would agree that the volume and depth of clean historical data related to occupancy, rate and revenue figures (including booking dates, rate codes, arrival dates, departure dates and revenue by day) provides the strongest basis for forecasting accuracy. Market-level data, including publicly available competitor rate information, also ranks as a must-have data source. Future flight demand, weather reports and geographical information (where guests are arriving from) may be used for forecasting purposes. Web shopping data (the number of consumers looking at and booking rooms and at what price, as well as the percentage of visitors abandoning the hotel website) may also provide some insights into current and future room demand as well as price sensitivity. The number of website visitors tends to correlate to the frequency of last-minute arrivals. Because consumers are shopping beyond hotel websites, there are insights to be gleaned from the travel distribution network, as well. Another option is “customer worth data” on hotel rewards club members. Yet another potentially valuable data source may be user-generated content in social media. In the end, accuracy in revenue forecasting tends to be a matter of quality over quantity rather than the more the merrier. Revenue managers may be excited about the ever-growing number of available data sources. But incorporating every last bit of data into their models can be a recipe for disaster. At a certain point, more data can simply mean more noise.

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Useful performance metrics. The most commonly used metric for measuring how well a hotel is managing its inventory and rates is revenue per available room (RevPAR), which is calculated in one of two ways: by either multiplying the average daily rate (ADR) by occupancy or by dividing the total guest room revenue by the total number of available rooms and then dividing that number by the number of days in a given time period. Just to be clear, occupancy refers to the percentage of guest rooms that are occupied during a given time period while ADR refers to the average room revenue per occupied room. Some hotel operators still make the mistake of focusing their promotional efforts solely on increasing room occupancy, no matter that higher occupancy can, in some cases, actually lead to lower profits. Yet while RevPAR provides a good picture of performance, it fails to measure actual profitability. That's because RevPAR doesn't take into account costs per occupied room (CPOR). Without knowing the operating costs, it's not possible to calculate the actual profit margin or determine target optimal occupancy. Hence the emergence of gross operating profit per available room (GOPPAR), which takes into account not only the amount of revenue generated but also the actual operational costs. Still, neither RevPAR nor GOPPAR look at non-room revenue streams such as restaurants, casinos, parking, spas, golf courses, etc. This shortcoming helps explain the advent of other metrics like TRevPAR (total revenue per available room). In addition, the industry is seeing new metrics around performance in other areas. Function space revenue performance can be measured in terms of meeting room utilization, attendee density and revenue per attendee. Revenue generating index (RGI), also known as RevPAR Index (RPI), looks at relative hotel revenue performance, by measuring the extent to which a hotel is achieving its "fair share" of revenue in comparison to a defined group of hotels. RGI is calculated by dividing the hotel's RevPAR by the RevPAR of the competitive set (the data for which can be obtained through a third-party provider). Similarly, average rate index (ARI) measures the extent to which the hotel is achieving its "fair share" of ADR. It is calculated by dividing the ADR of the hotel by the ADR of the competitive set. RGI and ARI — and, also, market penetration index (MPI) — provide a solid basis for performance comparison in the market.

While RevPAR provides a good picture of overall hotel performance, it fails to measure actual productivity because it doesn't take into account costs per occupied room.

Chapter 1: Key Concepts

Intelligent pricing. With next-generation revenue management, the idea is to automatically forecast demand and capacity for a perishable product or service and then price that product or service in a way that maximizes profits for the business. Here a key concept to keep in mind is *price elasticity of demand*. Demand is sensitive to changes in price and price is sensitive to changes in demand. Generally, hotels have a lot of elasticity because the main product in demand — guest rooms — is both perishable and fixed in capacity. Starfleet Research defines *intelligent pricing* as the science of making decisions for how to maximize room occupancy at the best possible price while factoring in all the related revenue questions in a real-time or near real-time manner. Questions that intelligent pricing addresses might include: What is the optimal price to charge in order to maximize revenue, accounting for the fact that demand will change as the price changes? What is the best possible rate for a guest room, taking into account the type of room as well as the length of stay? How can a hotel ensure that discounted price promotions won't dilute revenue and profits in the long run? Intelligent pricing addresses these questions by analyzing demand forecasts, competitor rates, price sensitivities and various other inputs and factors, including demand drivers like seasonality, day-of-week differences and market dynamics. Intelligent pricing is forever evolving with new approaches to forecasting demand and dynamically pricing room rates based on expected demand and capacity. For example, with the ability to price room types, channels and dates independently of each other, some hotels are adopting a pricing strategy based on the idea that different prospective guests should be offered different rates depending on which guest segment they fall into as well as which channel they are using for booking their reservation. The important point is that intelligent pricing can translate into financial outcomes. Consider: A mere \$2 reduction in the ADR for a 500-room hotel with a 75 percent occupancy rate would cost a hotel more than a quarter million dollars in lost profit in a single year. Advances in intelligent pricing are changing the revenue management game, enabling hotel operators to better optimize their business.

Demand is sensitive to changes in price and price is sensitive to changes in demand. Hotels have a lot of elasticity because rooms are perishable and fixed in capacity.

Chapter 2

Buying Considerations and Evaluation Checklist



Chapter 2. Buying Considerations

Most hotel operators, particularly those with properties in popular destinations, have a lot to celebrate. In the United States, the industry has enjoyed eight straight years of RevPAR growth. Industry analysts agree that the party may be far from over. STR and Tourism Economics predict that U.S. hotel occupancy rates this year will increase to 66 percent, ADR will rise 2.4 percent, and RevPAR will increase 2.7 percent. The luxury and independent chain segments are expected to report the largest increases in occupancy, according to these research firms, while independent hotels are forecasted to see the most substantial growth in ADR and RevPAR. PwC forecasts occupancy to reach the highest level in more than 35 years.

The steady climb in hotel occupancy rates and record-breaking RevPAR growth continues, albeit at a slower rate, even despite the emergence of some very real challenges to the hotel industry. These include the onerous commission structures imposed by online travel agencies (OTAs) and the effect of Airbnb and smaller online marketplaces operating in the so-called *sharing economy*. In addition, there is the simple fact that, in many markets, supply consistently outpaces demand, reducing hotels' pricing power. Many hotels have been hampered by internal challenges, as well, not the least of which, in some cases, is the limited number of rate codes imposed by legacy property management systems, constraining the number of price points a hotel can offer potential customers.

The widespread adoption of data-driven revenue management strategies and advanced technologies no doubt deserve a lot of the credit. These capabilities make it possible for hotel operators to yield rates more aggressively than ever before. Data is the new oil, as they say, and analytics is the engine that converts the data into increased profitability, as evidenced by these record levels of RevPAR growth. Until recently, the idea of a revenue manager gazing into the dashboard equivalent of a crystal ball and generating precise demand forecasts for every night of the year across every room type and every guest segment was the stuff of fiction. Now, revenue managers have the tools to generate millions of new forecasts based on analysis of demand forecasts, competitor rates, market conditions, price sensitivities and demand drivers like seasonality, day-of-week differences and market dynamics.

The widespread adoption of data-driven revenue management strategies and advanced technologies no doubt deserve a lot of the credit for continued RevPAR growth.

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A state-of-the-art solution is capable of generating tens of thousands of optimal pricing decisions on a daily basis, and there is reason to believe that revenue management capabilities will get even better as the analytics continue to evolve. In fact, according to research conducted for this Smart Decision Guide, more than half (53 percent) of today's hotel operators believe that revenue management will become even more automated with further advances in data analytics capabilities. So, which technology solution is the right one? How can a hotel operator be assured that the solution they implement will best meet the needs of the hotel and enable revenue managers to achieve optimal results? The following are just a few key buying considerations to keep in mind.

Technology interoperability and data integration. Hotel operators today can gain a deep, unprecedented understanding of their guests —who they are, what they do, what their preferences are, and how much they spend across the property. Combining the platform capabilities of a next-generation property management system (PMS) and an advanced revenue management solution, hotels can automate decision-making processes in ways that can make a world of difference in terms of pricing and inventory management. Technology integration is key to revenue management success. The PMS, the central reservations system (CRS) or channel manager, and the revenue management solution all need to seamlessly connect and share data —preferably, in a real-time manner. Inventory-related data needs to flow into all distribution channels, including direct booking platforms and call centers, as well as the global distribution system (GDS) and OTAs. The CRS needs to publish optimal pricing decisions and channel recommendations based on input from the revenue management system. In short, no revenue management solution can be treated as a standalone application. It needs to seamlessly integrate with multiple data streams. It needs to integrate with marketing, sales and distribution systems as well as with OTAs and other third-party channels. Internally, point of sale (POS) data needs to integrate with PMS data to provide a holistic view of a guest's stay, including their ancillary spending on food and beverages, guest services, spa visits, etc. Buyers need to know that all technology components and data sources are compatible with the solution and also that all historical PMS data can be readily extracted and validated.

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Chapter 2. Buying Considerations

Cloud computing data processing power. Advances in data processing power, largely enabled by the rapid growth of cloud computing, are enabling solution providers to develop capabilities that revenue managers have been striving towards for more than a decade. Advanced revenue management solutions are able to process increasingly large volumes of data, and faster than ever. With the advent of a next-generation hospitality platform built for the cloud, the grand movement to unify the disparate and fragmented technologies and data silos has become an achievable goal. Hotels can connect and seamlessly share data in the cloud across all parts of the property or properties and across all of the various hospitality solutions. For a large property, the totality of the data set may include dozens of guest segments, a dozen or more room types, several years of historical booking and reservations data, and upwards of a dozen length-of-stay buckets. Advanced processing power makes it possible to include real-time integration of customer lifetime value (CLV) into pricing and availability, modeling consumer behavior from click-stream data, and integrating loyalty and total property spend data. Add to the mix competitive rate data, demand data, multi-market economic data, and even air traffic and weather predictions, if desired. Combining all of these data sets for just one hotel could amount to several hundred million observations. Generating the pricing and distribution recommendations could easily require result in thousands of decisions being generated each day for every day into the future. Multiply that number for a hotel chain with dozens of properties and it quickly becomes clear that, more than anything, revenue management is a big data challenge. As an example, one major hotel brand recently revealed that it generates more than 45 million forecasts nightly for each hotel, segment, room type, and channel for the next 365-day period. Needless to say, the processing and algorithms require an enormous amount of data storage and processing capacity to accomplish this task. While even global hotel brands may not have data processing requirements that are in the same league as Amazon, Apple, Facebook or Google, their data processing needs are certainly large enough to constantly stretch the limits of on-premise data storage and computing capacity, hence the need for cloud-based deployment. Prospective buyers need to know that any revenue management solution under consideration can handle the rigors of big data processing and optimize pricing calculations in highly compressed timeframes.

The totality of the data set may include dozens of guest segments, a dozen or more room types, years of historical booking and reservations data, and upwards of a dozen length-of-stay types.

Chapter 2. Buying Considerations

Channel management and optimization. Rates and inventory information need to be reflected accurately across all systems and touchpoints, including OTAs and other partner- and guest-facing channels. Otherwise, the prices that are presented to prospective guests on some channels may be lower than desired or rooms presented on some channels as available may, in reality, be unavailable, and the property may be overbooked. Inputting room rate and availability changes manually can result in errors that damage the brand's reputation and lead to revenue loss. It is important to understand the extent to which room change updates are handled automatically rather than manually and what the average lag time is in implementing channel updates.

Customization to user and property needs. Because users have differing needs, any solution will invariably require some degree of customization. Revenue managers should be able to create notifications based on their own predefined triggers. They should be able to define the data inputs and dashboard views based on their own priorities and display preferences. Flexibility in configuration is needed to mine the right data and generate actionable insights. Prospective buyers should have a high level of confidence that any solution under consideration has flexibility and customization capabilities to meet the needs of the property as well as those of the revenue manager(s) and other end-users.

Group sales optimization. Buyers with group business goals should check that any solution under consideration provides group sales optimization. This means being able to evaluate group requests by forecasting the impact and displacement of transient guests while calculating ideal group rates. Some solutions offer pricing recommendations by room type to maximize inventory and can provide meeting planners with a blended price quotation. Some solutions suggest alternate dates for flexible groups based on projected demand and availability to drive business to dates where the hotel stands to gain the most profit. Some solutions offer simultaneous evaluation of multiple properties to identify which one would be the most profitable for the entire enterprise. Having profit-based price evaluation capabilities enables sales teams to understand unsold and undersold meetings and events space as well as less-than-optimal displacement of group business.

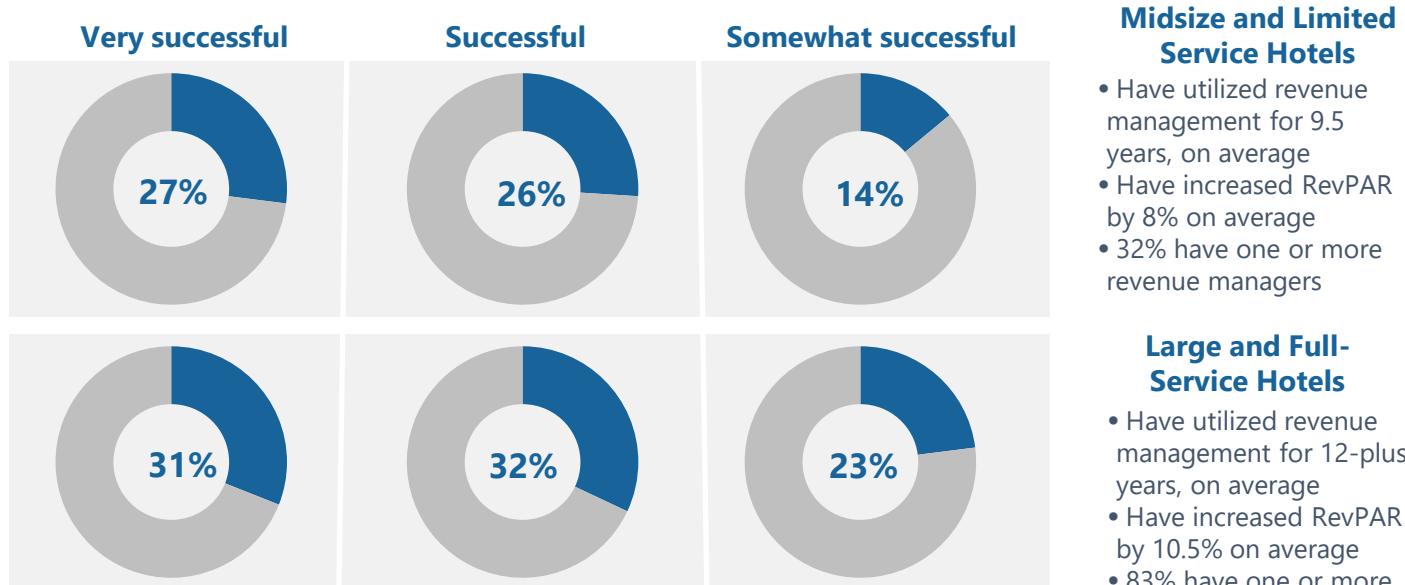
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Chapter 2. Buying Considerations

Expected return on investment. Making the business case for upgrading revenue management capabilities means projecting the likely return on investment (ROI). Unlike many other technology-enabled business initiatives, the results of a revenue management initiative can generally be measured by way of an ROI calculation. Assessing the value of a revenue management solution from a cost standpoint means determining the extent to which the technology is achieving optimal financial results. Comparing historical performance to current performance is one approach. But due to changing business practices, market conditions and various other factors, this approach may fail to provide an apples-to-apples comparison. Revenue opportunity uplift goes beyond a simple ROI calculation or historical performance analysis. A careful measurement of RevPAR performance during a given time period compared against the same time period in the year prior to technology implementation may allow hotel operators to track incremental improvement driven solely by the new solution. In this way, hotel operators can gain an accurate read on time to value and determine the lift in revenue and profitability the new technology is currently delivering.

Research Data Point

"How would you rate your company's success in terms of utilizing revenue management to improve financial performance?"



Research findings are derived from the Q4 2017 survey on Hospitality Revenue Management

Chapter 2: Evaluation Checklist

The following is an Evaluation Checklist for conducting an apples-to-apples comparison of key buying considerations for hospitality revenue management solutions. Additional considerations can be added. Relative weightings can be assigned on a scale of 1 ("This buying consideration has no bearing on our purchase decision") to 10 ("This buying consideration is a very important factor").

Buying Consideration	Weighting	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
1. Technology interoperability / data integration				
2. Data processing power				
3. Intelligent pricing / analytic modeling				
4. Channel (OTA) optimization				
5. Customizability to property needs				
6. Cloud hosting (hybrid / native / multi-tenant)				
7. Flexibility in data analysis and reporting				
8. Group sales optimization				
9. Collaboration (supports data sharing between sales, marketing & revenue mgmt)				
10. Other features and functionality				
a. Demand forecasting management				
b. Group pricing management				
c. Multiple property management				
d. Meetings & events revenue management				
e. Competitive rate shopping management				
e. Other _____				
11. Support, training and consulting services				
12. Reputation / client base / success stories				
13. Cost (TCO) / Expected ROI				
Overall Rankings	N/A			

Chapter 3

Must-Ask Questions



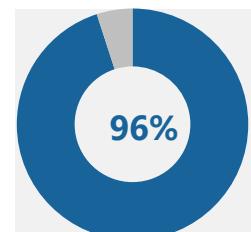
Chapter 3: Must-Ask Questions

In a matter of a decade, revenue management has gone from being an undertaking with uncertain financial upside potential to a strategic imperative with highly predictable revenue outcomes. At the same time, the demand for next-generation solutions has increased with the proliferation of online travel agencies (OTAs) with differing pricing and commission structures, shrinking booking windows, ever-more intense hotel competition in high-demand destinations and ever-increasing pressure to drive profitable growth. According to the research, more than one-quarter (28%) of hoteliers who have not upgraded their revenue management within the past 3 years plan to do so in the next 12 months.

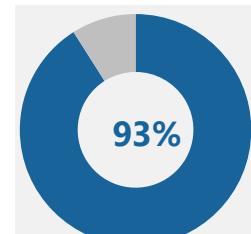
By asking the right questions, decision makers can determine which revenue management solution on the market best fits their needs and is most likely to deliver the benefits they seek, with minimal risk and expense. The hotel's revenue manager(s) — people who know the nuts and bolts of inventory management and length of stay control and who understand, for example, how to calculate group rates and apply rate fences — should be included in the evaluation process. Most revenue managers want solutions that provide visibility. They want to be able to look under the hood and dive into price sensitivity data and observe at a detailed level what inputs are behind the system outputs that are being made and how adjustments to the decision model would change revenue outcomes. They do not want to wait for actual booking numbers to come in to understand the impact of their strategies and determine whether they made the right decisions. In short, revenue managers need to be comfortable that the new solution will enable them to do their jobs with maximum effectiveness.

Research Data Point

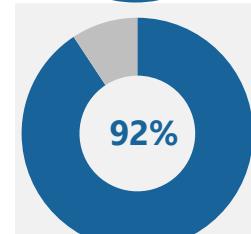
Percentages of hoteliers who view each of the following success factors as “important” or “very important.”



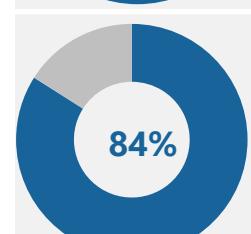
Integrating all historic booking data, reservation data, transaction data, competitive data, and all other relevant data



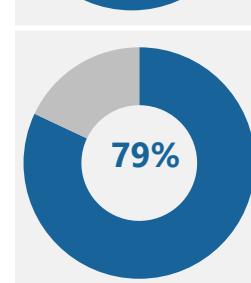
Continuously refining the accuracy of the forecasting model for room rate recommendations



Customizing the revenue management solution and processes to fit the specific needs of the hotel



Integrating revenue management activities with sales and marketing activities



Hiring the right revenue managers and creating the right culture within the organization

Research findings are derived from the Q4 2017 survey on Hospitality Revenue Management.



Chapter 3: Must-Ask Questions

The following are just a few of the questions that decision makers and influencers may wish to explore with solution providers to ensure that, once implemented, the revenue management solution will enable them to achieve their desired business outcomes.

Will the solution provide the answers we need to our pricing questions? To be effective, revenue managers require tools that will enable them to answer all of their day-to-day pricing questions. These questions may be voluminous, and some may be difficult to always know in advance. Such questions might include: By how much should we increase or decrease our rates for a given type of room? How many groups, and what size groups, should we accept on a given day? How much should we charge walk-in guests? What should be the floor and ceiling for our rate range? Are the changes in demand and bookings likely to represent a short-term or long-term pattern – and, if the latter, what actions should we take in response? To what extent should we discount negotiated rates? What should our best available rates be for the coming year? What discounts and promotions, and to what target customer segments, are likely to perform well right now and in the near-future? What discounts would likely dilute profits and should we therefore avoid? To what extent should we mark up our premium rooms, based on the current and near-term demand patterns? What competitors' price moves would likely affect these demand patterns and how should we respond if those moves become reality? How can we counteract cancellations and no-shows, group wash, extensions and early departures to capture optimal profitability? *Tip: Compile a comprehensive list of pricing questions and verify that the solution will be able to address these questions in a straight-forward manner.*

To what extent does the solution offer depth and flexibility in data analysis

and reporting? Revenue management is a quantitative puzzle with ever-changing numbers, patterns and results and a need for continuous refinement. Delving into the data, testing different if/then scenarios, and collating actual results requires a high degree of flexibility. Not all data queries can be anticipated. A significant percentage of pricing questions may, in fact, need to be investigated on an ad hoc basis. Out-of-the-box functionality may satisfy the needs of novice users or small

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Chapter 3: Must-Ask Questions

properties with relatively simple needs. But it is likely to be insufficient for more sophisticated revenue managers and larger properties with multiple room types, customer segments and ancillary revenue streams. A solution should provide for flexibility, which is important when it comes to setting pricing, noting special events, adjusting segmentation schemes, etc. A solution should make it easy to accommodate virtually any need, including the need to monitor and measure individual property, portfolio, and departmental performance, the need to create customizable hierarchies for different geo-markets, channels, room types, time periods and loyalty programs. Important questions might include: Once problem areas are identified, can the solution guide users on how to take appropriate action? Can tactical decisions, including the overall impact, be tested live? Can the dashboards provide exception reporting, identifying areas needing the most attention? *Tip: Verify that the solution is flexible in terms of keys areas of functionality, including custom reporting, and validate all of the vendors' claims. If customized reporting is possible, find out what is involved in the process of filtering and sorting data according to a specified set of parameters.*

What is the solution provider's track record of success? As with any technology solution purchase, reputation and customer satisfaction are important factors in the decision-making process. Nobody wants to purchase and implement a revenue management solution that falls short of expectations due to known shortcomings in stability, reliability or promised benefits. No input may be more important to the buying decision than that which can be gleaned from existing clients, preferably lodging properties that share some commonalities in terms of size, typography and existing technology infrastructure. A solution provider or consultant may be willing to provide one or more client references. And some clients, particularly those operating in noncompetitive markets, may be willing to share their experiences and perhaps even disclose results in terms of percentage increases in RevPAR. Client testimonials and success stories can also be valuable sources of information. *Tip: Find out what performance issues may arise by talking to existing clients, preferable ones that are similar in size and existing technology infrastructure. Ask about the product roadmap to understand the plan for future features and functionality and ask about the provider's track record of delivering against that roadmap and deadlines.*

A solution should provide for flexibility, which is important when it comes to setting pricing, noting special events, adjusting segmentation schemes, etc.

Chapter 3: Must-Ask Questions

How long will it take for problems to be resolved? Decision makers should have clear expectations around customer support and problem resolution as well as the training that may be needed to get front desk employees and other staff up to speed on the new system. Almost three-quarters (73%) of hotel operators agree that user training ranks as a key success factor in ensuring that a revenue management solution is utilized as effectively as possible. Does the solution provider (or a certified subcontractor) offer adequate training? Do the team members in charge of support and training have revenue management experience of their own from previous jobs at hospitality companies? Does the provider offer online troubleshooting and diagnosis should technical issues arise? Is local in-person service and support a possibility? *Tip: Make sure that problems will get resolved in a timely manner. Some solution providers will go so far as to guarantee response and case resolution times.*

Almost three-quarters (73%) of hotel operators agree that user training ranks as a key success factor in ensuring that a revenue management solution is utilized as effectively as possible.

Chapter 4

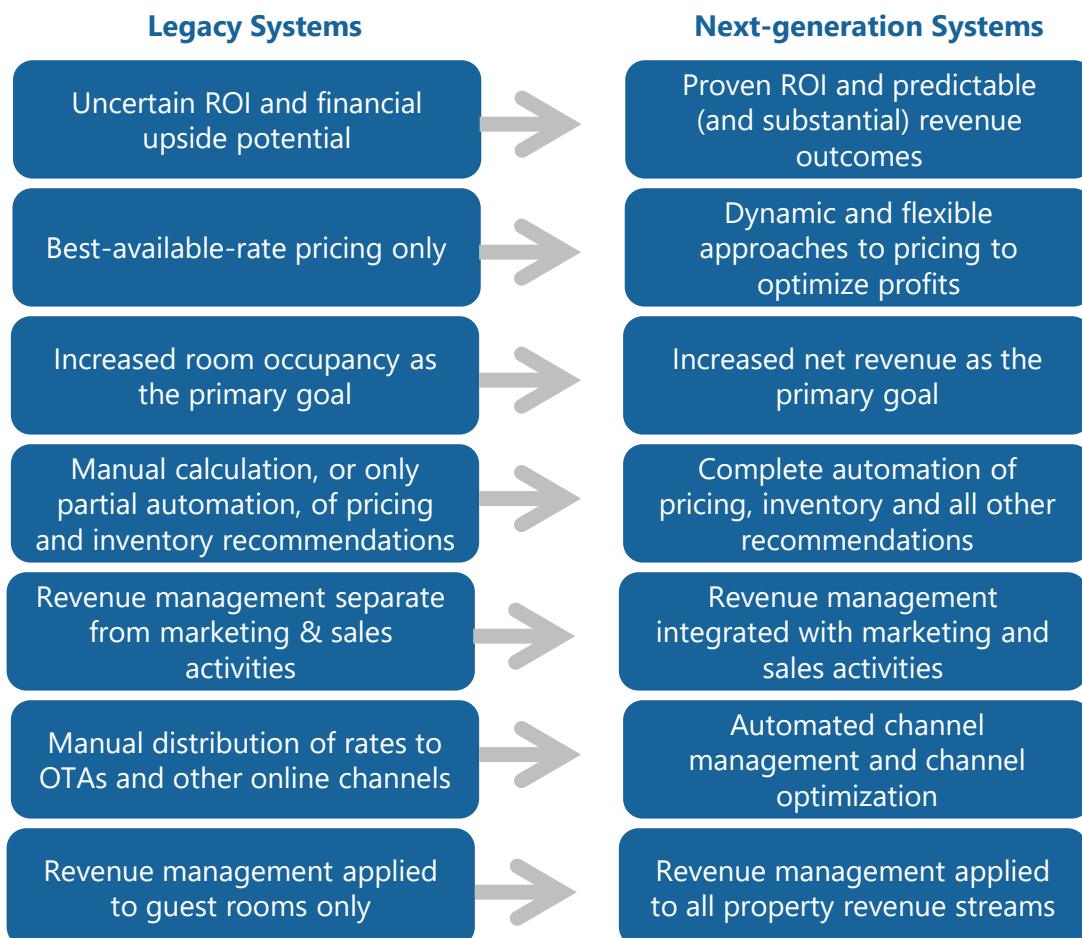
Roadmap and Recommendations



Chapter 4: Roadmap

Revenue management solutions have evolved by leaps and bounds in recent years. The best of these solutions can achieve some truly amazing feats — like calculate price sensitivity of guest demand, taking into account such factors as season, lead time and room type. That is not something that can be done using Excel spreadsheets. Needless to say, hotel operators who rely on Excel for their revenue management needs are obviously at a distinct disadvantage. Perhaps less obvious is the fact that revenue management capabilities have advanced at such a rapid pace in recent years that hotel operators who rely on software solutions that were thought to perform at a high level only a few years ago may also be at a distinct disadvantage, as well.

This roadmap diagram illustrates the migration path for revenue management solutions as they evolve in scope, sophistication, accuracy — and, ultimately, in delivering positive business results.



Chapter 4: Recommendations

Upgrading revenue management capabilities means not only implementing the right technology solution and integrating the right data sources — ones that have been shown to improve forecast accuracy and pricing decisions — but also putting the right organizational resources in place and creating a revenue-focused culture.

Following are a few recommendations for buyers to keep in mind.

Focus on data integration. The revenue management solution needs to seamlessly integrate with the property management system (PMS), which, in turn, needs to integrate with the central reservations system (CRS) or channel manager. For revenue strategy to be most impactful, the PMS also needs to incorporate valuable data streams from all point of sale (POS) systems in order to capture ancillary spending on food and beverage purchases, as well as function-specific solutions (spa, golf, etc.).

Focus on data quality. Choose data sources that will help with accurate decision-making and steer clear of all the rest. Be wary of incorporating every last piece of data that may be available from every possible data source into the decision model. Revenue forecasting accuracy tends to be a case of “quality over quantity” rather than “the more, the merrier.” While poor technology integration can result in some data discrepancies, most data accuracy issues stem from human error. Put consistent processes in place that staff can follow to help improve data accuracy.

Hire the right revenue manager(s). The role of the revenue manager has never been more important. In fact, some industry observers contend that revenue managers should be the highest paid employees in the hotel, given their potential contribution level to top-line revenue growth. Of course, in smaller hotels with limited budgets, the revenue manager and general manager are oftentimes one and the same person. Unfortunately, general managers may have little or no training in the science of demand forecasting and price optimization, invariably leading to suboptimal results. Ideally, the individual running the show should have the specialized skills and knowledge needed to ensure the solution produces maximum benefit. In addition to employing large teams of seasoned revenue managers, some major hotels are now carving out positions for data scientists to evaluate all of the data that is collected and to refine the pricing models based on that data.

Be wary of incorporating every last piece of data into the decision model. Revenue forecasting accuracy tends to be a case of “quality over quantity” rather than “the more, the merrier.”

Chapter 4: Recommendations

Think in terms of “total revenue management.” While guest room revenue is the bread and butter of most hotels, ancillary revenue streams can contribute significantly to overall revenue and profitability. Look to see if there may be a golden opportunity to apply revenue management tactics in these and other non-room categories to achieve optimal financial results. Hotels that fail to embrace next-generation solutions that enable “total revenue management” will fall behind their competitors. The best of revenue management solutions allow hotels to consider the contribution margins and capacity constraints of not just guest rooms, but also restaurants, bars and cafes, spas, golf courses, ski lifts, and any other assets of the property. Some advanced revenue management solutions include capabilities specifically focused on optimizing meetings and events revenue and driving profitability. These capabilities allow hoteliers to optimize profits across multiple revenue streams, from guest rooms and meeting spaces to food and beverage, catering, A/V equipment rental, ancillaries and more. Thinking in terms of total revenue management, taking into account the ancillary spending that takes place in hotel restaurants, bars, conference centers, banquet space, golf courses, etc. and not just revenue management as it pertains to guest rooms, can mean leaving a lot less money on the table and significantly boosting revenue and profitability.

Partner with the sales and marketing departments. The pricing recommendations and market insights generated by revenue managers can be valuable across multiple parts of the organization. Access to the tools and dashboards should be made available to marketers, in particular, who are charged with demand generation activities. Insights, such as those that forecast periods of high demand versus low demand and that reveal which customer segments are planning to book rooms for a certain period, should inform every campaign. The insights should inform how aggressive to be with marketing offers and promotions, toward which customer segments the offers and promotions should be directed, and when, exactly, to present the offers and promotions, and which marketing tactics are most likely to elicit the desired responses. To achieve optimal results, it’s imperative that revenue managers work hand-in-hand with the sales and marketing functions and integrate all of their customer acquisition strategies.

Some advanced revenue management solutions include capabilities that are specifically focused on optimizing meetings and events revenue and driving profitability.

Chapter 4: Recommendations

Ensure automation of room availability and rate change distribution. Hotels need to customize the direct booking engine within the CRS, or channel manager with revenue decisions and to automate channel-specific offers via the call center and other channels. The CRS should integrate with OTAs specific to the market in which the hotel operates. Built-in mapping capabilities should make it possible to organize OTAs, which today serve as both booking engines and online shopping channels. Channel management integration ensures that room rates and inventory availability update quickly and accurately across all booking channels. Otherwise, prices presented on some channels may be lower than desired. Similarly, rooms presented as available may, in reality, be unavailable, in which case the property risks becoming overbooked. Manually inputting room and rate changes can result in errors that, ultimately, can damage the brand's reputation and result in revenue loss.

Build a revenue management strategy and culture. A revenue management strategy is a blueprint for improving financial performance over a specific period of time. It should incorporate all of the revenue streams from across all parts of the hotel as well as all of the revenue drivers, from the sales department to the online distribution channels. The strategy should be built upon a solid foundation of revenue goals using targeted RevPAR, GOPPAR and other relevant metrics for tracking progress. It should include a timeline with key milestones and spell out the tactics for achieving success. The strategy should be as specific as possible, detailing, for example, how the property approaches pricing. Done right, the strategy will help create cognitive alignment amongst all employees regarding the value of revenue management.

A revenue management strategy is a blueprint for improving financial performance over a specific period of time and be built on a solid foundation of revenue goals that use relevant metrics.

Chapter 5

Inside Voices and Outside Voices



Chapter 5: Inside Voices

Hotel revenue managers and other industry practitioners with first-hand experience with hospitality revenue management tend to have a lot to say about the topic. Following are a few perspectives gleaned from individuals who participated in the survey that produced the research findings included in this Smart Decision Guide.

I know a lot of hoteliers are still using the same strategies and technologies for yielding rates that they used ten or fifteen years ago, which is crazy. These strategies and technologies just aren't effective anymore. To tell you the truth, they weren't all that effective before, either. Nowadays the only way hoteliers can stay competitive is to adopt advanced revenue management strategies and solutions, especially now that there's this whole new world of data that can be integrated into the pricing model. Hoteliers that haven't updated their capabilities for managing pricing in recent years are probably leaving a lot of money on the table. For us, having these capabilities have made all the difference in the world.

Senior executive, full-service hotel

To be truly successful at this game, you have to eliminate the traditional walls that stand between these different functions. Everyone across the organization benefits when they work cooperatively to optimize revenue. Using a centralized technology that everyone can access can help a lot.

Revenue manager, full-service hotel

The right revenue management solution is a prerequisite to making optimal pricing and distribution decisions. Our hotel has seen a big increase in RevPAR since we deployed our new solution in 2016. For the first time, we've been able to take full advantage of our historical PMS data, our competitors' pricing data, and several other sources of data to develop more sophisticated strategy pricing strategies... We're able to forecast demand far more accurately than we were able to do previously.

Revenue manager, mid-size hotel

A luxury resort like ours has a lot of different revenue levers. It's really important that we're able to look at all of these levers in a single dashboard. Having a holistic view of all the OTAs and all the channels and all of the data that feeds into the model is the only way to optimize revenue performance.

Marketing manager, full-service hotel

Chapter 5. Outside Voices

Following are a few additional perspectives from industry observers, including industry practitioners as well as consultants, trade publication editors and market researchers, with insights into next-generation hospitality revenue management strategies and solutions.

I think the title and buzz word that has our industry locked on "revenue management" is entirely the wrong way to look at it. It is not revenue we are after, it is profit. Revenue is where we start but it is always profit that we end up with. Understanding what happens to the room revenue and resulting profit from different segments is the starting point to a much more effective outcome.

David Lund, "The Hotel Financial Coach," *Hospitality Net*

We have been budgeting and forecasting by segment, day by day, for years. Our granular process allows for day/demand/event shift analysis from year to year as our system remembers all prior and one-time impacts.... In order to compensate for fluctuations and capture opportunity, we monitor three business bands at all time—a tier above our determined peer set, our peer set and a tier below.

Chris Green, principal and COO, Chesapeake Hospitality, as quoted in *Hotel News Now*

Hotels in many high-demand markets are hitting a ceiling in room rates.... To continue to generate growth, it is critical for owners and investors to look at two areas. The first is what area in a room can be monetized. This does not mean nickel and diming for things that guests expect. It means understanding what guests value and how much they are willing to pay for it. The second area is revenue beyond room revenue. Meeting and event spaces are an area that most hotels are seeing as underperforming. In fact, for many hotels, the profit potential of this revenue stream is so significant that it can contribute 40 percent to 60 percent of their total profits.

Esther Hertzfeld, Contributing Editor, *Hotel Management*

TRevPAR [total revenue per available room] is the big illusion of the industry. It has been on the table for years and we are far from being where we need to be in regards to it. Rooms is 70% of revenue. TRevPAR sounds like good talk, but the industry has to work from scratch on it. The data is there, although it is not as easy to get as it is for rooms.

Marta Varela, Director of Revenue Strategy, Barceló Hotels, speaking at Opportunity 2018 Revenue Management 3:0

Appendix

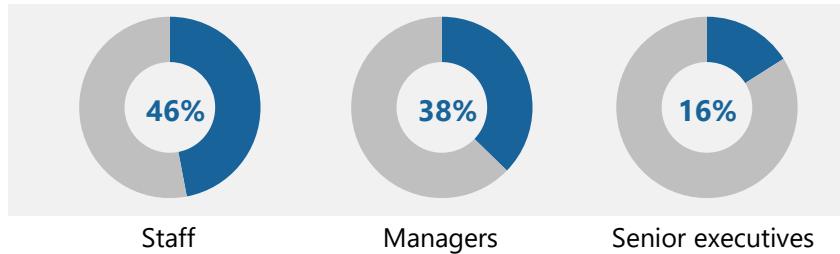
Research Notes and Underwriters



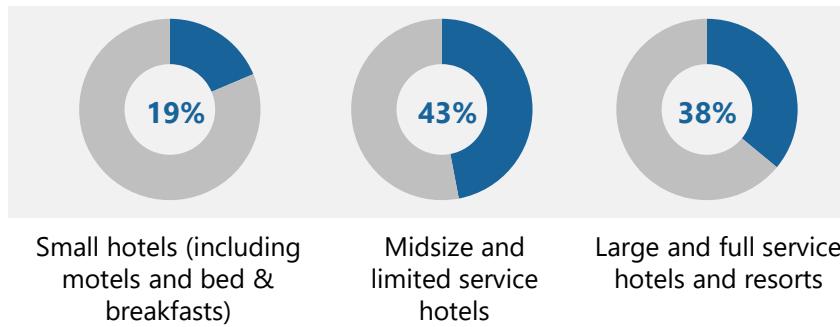
Appendix: Research Notes

In Q4 2017, Starfleet Media conducted an online survey, consisting of both multiple choice and open text questions, to capture the perspectives of industry practitioners with firsthand experience with hospitality revenue management. Some of the research findings are highlighted in this publication. Following is some basic information about the 167 qualified survey respondents who participated.

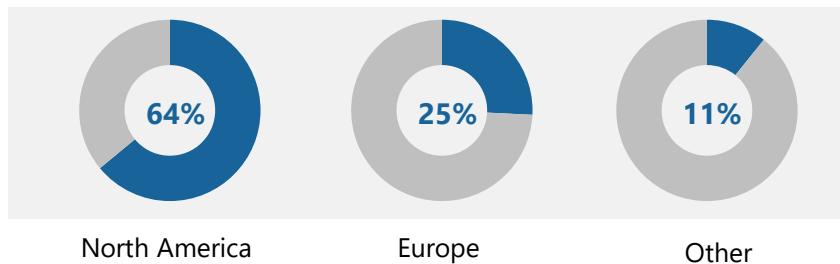
Job level / role of survey respondents



Size / category of survey respondents' hotel (or other lodging property) employers



Geographic location of survey respondents



Appendix: Underwriter



Rainmaker is the market leader in profit optimization solutions for the hospitality and gaming industries. Its software and consulting services help hotel, resort and casino hotel operators secure their most profitable guests.

The first company to incorporate “total guest value” into its revenue optimization model, Rainmaker leverages cutting-edge research and innovation to offer highly sophisticated systems that guarantee the highest possible profits.

Among Rainmaker’s many marquee clients are Caesars Entertainment, Wynn Las Vegas, Omni Hotels and Resorts, and One & Only Resorts. For five years running, Rainmaker has been ranked on the Inc. 5000 list of America’s fastest-growing privately held companies. It is also on the Atlanta Business Chronicle’s list of the 100 Fastest Growing Companies in Atlanta.

www.letitrain.com

Contact:

4550 North Point Pkwy., Suite 400
Alpharetta, GA 30022
Contact@LetItRain.com
+1-678-578-5700

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